Spy in every blink

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Mahesh Bhagwat is the new Hyderabad Police Commissioner

Hyderabad: In a major administrative reshuffle Telangana government transferred and posted 21 senior cadre IPS officers, bringing sweeping changes to the state police administration and several key departments.

Senior IPS officer Mahesh Muralidhar Bhagwat, currently serving as DGP (Law & Order), has been appointed as the new Hyderabad Police Commissioner, replacing V.C. Sajjanar who has been posted as DG Telangana Fire, Disaster Response, Emergency and Civil Defence he will also hold additional charge of Director General, Special Protection Force (SPF).

Among the other key changes, Dr. Soumya Mishra has been appointed DGP, Women & Safety,

SHE Teams and Bharosa, while Swati Lakra has been posted as Director General of Prisons & Correctional Services.

Charu Sinha, has been appointed Director General of the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), while Dr. Anil Kumar has been shifted to the post of Vice-Chairman and Managing Director of TGSRTC.

Vikram Singh Mann will take charge as DGP (Operations), Greyhounds and Octopus, while Akun Sabharwal has been appointed ADGP (Law & Order).

Y. Nagi Reddy has been posted as Commissioner, Civil Supplies, and Chandrasekhar Reddy as Director, Anti-Corruption Bureau.

Several other senior officers have also been assigned new responsibilities and additional charges in intelligence, police training, traffic management, road safety and various police zones.

Akun Sabharwal, who is waiting for posting is posted as Additional Director General of Police (L&O), Telangana, is also placed in full additional charge of the posts of Additional Director General of Police, Coordination and Additional Director General of Police, Technical Services (T-Spark), until further orders.

Chandrasekhar Reddy, Inspector General of Police, Multi- Zone-I is transferred and posted as Director, Anti-Corruption Bureau, duly relieving Avinash Mohanthy, from full additional charge.

Kartikeya, Inspector General of Police, Intelligence is transferred and posted as Inspector General of police, Multi-Zone-I vice S. Chandrasekhar Reddy he also will the post of Director, ICCC and will report to DGP through ADGP (Intelligence)

K. Ramesh Naidu, Inspector General of Police, Railways & Road Safety, Telangana, is transferred and posted



as Inspector General of police, railways and will report to Director, TG–TMARS.

D. Joel Davis, Jt. Commissioner of police, Traffic, Hyderabad city is transferred and posted as Joint Director, Road Safety and Joint Director, Traffic TG-TMARS he is also placed in full additional charge of the post of Jt. Commissioner of Police, Traffic, Hyderabad City, until further orders.

G. Chandana Deepthi, Joint Commissioner of Police (Admn. & Traffic), Future City Commissionerate is placed in full additional charge of the post of Deputy Inspector General of Police, Zone.VII, Jogulamba, until further orders, vice L.S. Chowhan, transferred.

Similarly R. Bhaskaran, DIG, CI Cell, Intelligence, Hyderabad is placed in full additional charge of the post of DIG (Intelligence), Telangana, until further orders.

K. Narayana Naik, Deputy Inspector General of Police, State Crime Records Bureau (SCRB), Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has been placed in full additional charge of the post of DIG, Zone-II, Basara, until further orders.

L.S. Chowhan is posted as Deputy Inspector General of Police, Coordination is also placed in full additional charge of the post of Deputy Inspector General of Police, Zone-VI, Charminar,until further orders.

Some people carry Constitution in pockets, democracy as 'personal property': PM Modi

New Delhi, Nov 12 (IANS) Making a scathing attack on main Opposition Congress and Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi accused the previous Congress-led government of selectively invoking the Constitution while claiming ownership over democratic values.

"Nowadays, some people pull out the Constitution as if it is tucked away in their pockets and democracy is their personal property," PM Modi said, alleging that such leaders remain "intoxicated by power".

Recalling his tenure as the Gujarat Chief Minister, the Prime Minister claimed that a government-affiliated institution named after a former Prime Minister had once ranked Gujarat as the country's best-performing state.

However, he alleged that the then Central government intervened and directed the organisation to seek prior approval before publishing such reports.

"The government told them, 'This will not do. You must obtain our approval before publishing any such report," PM Modi said.

Questioning the Opposition's commitment to democratic principles, the Prime Minister said, "These are the very people who now lecture us on democracy."

He also criticised what he described as the lingering mindset of some opposition leaders, saying their attachment to power remained evident even after leaving office.

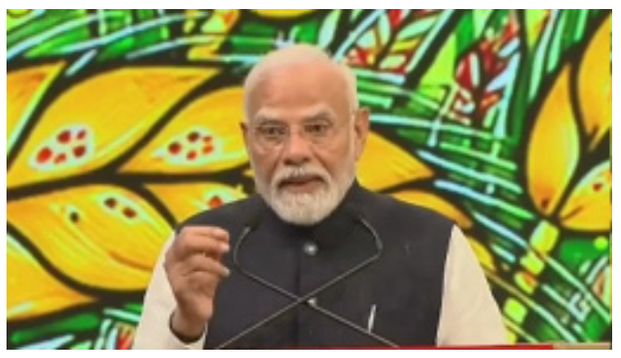
"Even when they (opposition leaders) are not in power, they behave this way. It is a strange kind of intoxication with power," the Prime Minister said.

Shifting focus to agriculture, PM Modi said that reducing the financial burden on farmers continues to be a key priority for the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Union government.

He highlighted the Centre's substantial spending on fertiliser subsidies, saying that nearly Rs 16 lakh crore has been allocated to ensure affordable fertilisers for cultivators.

He noted that while a bag of urea costs around Rs 3,000 in international markets, it is made available to Indian farmers for less than Rs 300.

Highlighting progress in the farm and allied sectors,



PM Modi said India has emerged as the world's largest milk producer as a result of the White Revolution.

He added that over the past decade, milk production has increased by 70 per cent, egg production by 90 per cent and honey production from around 80,000 tonnes to 1.5 lakh tonnes.

The Prime Minister also said that India is now the second-largest producer of wheat, cotton, vegetables and fish globally.

These achievements, he added, underscore the contribution, resilience and productivity of Indian farmers.

Emphasising the importance of allied agricultural activities, PM Modi said that horticulture production has also registered significant growth, rising from about 280 million tonnes to more than 350 million tonnes, alongside the sharp increase in honey output.

He added that these gains reflect the growing strength and diversification of India's agricultural economy.

He noted that agricultural scientists are developing equipment that reduces the cost of cultivation and makes tasks such as sowing and harvesting easier.

The Union government's larger objective, PM Modi said, is to transform 'annadatas' (food providers) into 'krishi udyamis' (agricultural entrepreneurs).

Work is already underway to promote value addition at the source of production so that farmers can earn more from their produce, the Prime Minister added.

Andhra's investment commitments to go up to Rs 32.49 lakh crore: CM Naidu

Visakhapatnam, Nov 12 (IANS) Andhra Pradesh's total investment commitments will go up to ?32.49 lakh crore since June 2024 with the signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) at the 31st CII Partnership Summit, which began here on Thursday, Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu.

He announced that 303 MoUs involving proposed investments of ?9.89 lakh crore would be signed at the summit.

The Chief Minister said that over the last two-and-a-half years, Andhra Pradesh secured 714 investment MoUs worth ?22.6 lakh crore, with 526 projects worth ?17.1 lakh crore moving towards implementation - achieving a 74% conversion rate.

He claimed that this reflects their commitment to turning investment commitments into projects on the ground.

"Building on this momentum, 303 new MoUs worth ?9.89 lakh crore are set to be formalised at the 31st CII Partnership Summit, taking Andhra Pradesh's total investment commitments to ?32.49 lakh crore. These milestones reflect the growing global confidence in Andhra Pradesh and our determination to translate investment commitments into results," he said.

Addressing the summit, he said 526 projects involving ?17.10 lakh crore had received land and incentive approvals. As many as 303 projects, with investments of ?7.30 lakh crore, are ready for the construction stage.

Nearly 58 per cent of the projects that received land and incentive approvals had reached the construction-ready stage.

The Chief Minister explained the investment opportunities, industrial policies and long-term development vision of Andhra Pradesh through a presentation.

Highlighting the State's focus on emerging and strategic sectors, he said Andhra Pradesh was working towards becoming a major manufacturing and technology hub in areas such as rare earth minerals, steel production, solar wafers, solar energy and battery energy storage.

The State has identified several priority sectors, including the Critical Minerals Mission, Steel Policy, Solar Mission, defence self-reliance, Space Vision, Semiconductor Mission, Logistics Policy, Quantum Technology, Green Hydrogen and Maritime Development.

The Chief Minister said a quantum computer would be established in Amaravati, while quantum equipment would also be manufactured under the 'Made in Amaravati' brand. A dedicated Drone City was being developed to manufacture drones for civilian and defence applications. Drones were already being used to deliver medicines to remote areas.

He said Andhra Pradesh aimed to emerge as a global horticulture hub by attracting investments in food processing and allied industries.The Chief Minister outlined ambitious targets across key sectors. A target of 160 GW renewable energy generation capacity has been set, with approvals already granted for 114 GW. The State aims to achieve annual electronics production worth ?4.20 lakh crore. Projects worth approximately ?31,926 crore have already received approval in electronics and home appliances manufacturing.

An investment target of ?50,000 crore has been set, along with a separate target of ?25,000 crore for the space sector. The State aims to attract investments worth ?30,000 crore in the food processing sector.



Approvals have been granted for 42 GW of solar cell manufacturing capacity and 53 GW of ingot and wafer manufacturing capacity. Data centre projects with a proposed capacity of 4.6 GW have received approval in Andhra Pradesh, against the existing national installed capacity of approximately 1.5 GW.

The Chief Minister said Amaravati was being developed as a Blue-Green Capital City with iconic buildings and advanced technological infrastructure. A quantum computing manufacturing facility would be established across 250 acres in Amaravati. Describing Amaravati Quantum Valley as the first such project in South Asia, he announced that it would be inaugurated on February 3, 2027.Highlighting Andhra Pradesh's strategic geographical advantage, the Chief Minister said the State was emerging as a leading logistics destination with six operational ports, airports, high-speed rail connectivity and an extensive road network.

Andhra Pradesh currently ranks fourth in the country in cargo handling. Its six operational ports have an annual handling capacity of 346 million tonnes and handled 209 million tonnes of cargo during 2025–26. Four new ports are expected to add another 108 million tonnes of annual cargo-handling capacity.The Chief Minister said Andhra Pradesh currently had six airports with a combined annual passenger-handling capacity of 1.55 crore. Around 62 lakh passengers travelled through these airports during 2025–26. Plans were underway to develop nine greenfield airports, with Bhogapuram, Amaravati and Tirupati as major aviation hubs.

Telangana CM appears before court in an old case

Hyderabad, Nov 12 (IANS) Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy appeared before the Public Representatives Court, Nampally, on Thursday in connection with cases registered against him during the previous government's tenure.

A case was registered against Revanth Reddy in 2021 for allegedly violating COVID-19 guidelines during the campaign for the by-election to the Nagarjuna Sagar Assembly seat. Revanth Reddy was then president of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC).

He had participated in the election campaign in Chalakurti village of Peddapur mandal in Nalgonda district on April 11, 2021.

He was booked for not wearing a mask and not following other COVID-19 guidelines.

As part of the hearing in the case, the court recorded Revanth Reddy's statement under section 313 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Similar cases were registered against Revanth Reddy at other places in the state for violation of COVID-19 rules and the Model Code of Conduct.

On February 28, 2026, he had appeared before the Public Representatives Court in connection with seven cases registered during the previous government's tenure.

The cases pertain to alleged violations during the 2019 Huzurnagar by-election and a public meeting held in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the allegations, during the 2019 Huzurnagar by-election campaign, a rally was organised with around 40 vehicles and DJ sound systems in support of a candidate. Cases were registered against Revanth Reddy and then MP Uttam Kumar Reddy in this connection.

Last year, the Telangana High Court had quashed a criminal case against Chief Minister Revanth Reddy over alleged Model Code of Conduct (MCC) violations during the 2019 Huzurnagar by-elections.

The case, registered at Garidepally police station, named Revanth Reddy as accused no. 2 and then MP N Uttam Kumar Reddy as accused no. 1. They were booked under Section 188 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for purportedly holding a campaign meeting in Ponugodu mandal on October 19, 2019, without permission from election officials.

Police later filed a chargesheet before the Principal Special Judicial First Class Magistrate for Excise Cases in Hyderabad.

The High Court observed that MCC-related offences in this case were not maintainable and the chargesheet lacked evidence of intentional disobedience.

The order came on Revanth Reddy's plea to quash the proceedings.

Email Threatens Blasts at Mumbai Mayor's Office, Airport, Big B's Home

MUMBAI: Security was stepped up across Mumbai on Thursday after an email threatened bomb blasts at several prominent locations, including Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, the Mayor's office, actor Amitabh Bachchan's bungalow 'Jalsa' and a Punjab National Bank (PNB) branch, police said.The email, received at 10.52 am, was addressed to PNB's Mumbai zonal office, the Local Crime Branch at Cuffe Parade and the bank's Zaveri Bazar branch in south Mumbai.According to police, the subject line warned of an explosion at a PNB branch at 1.11 pm. The message also mentioned November 27 and December 31 as possible dates for further attacks.The email identified several potential targets, including banks, the airport, Mahalaxmi Stadium, Bachchan's Juhu residence and the Mayor's office. It also contained references to Khalistan and a purported organisation called the Khalistan National Army.

EDITORIAL

LK Advani — a legacy of triumph, irony and unfulfilled ambitions

Lal Krishna Advani, who has entered his 100th year, is perhaps the only politician whose political journey intersected with every important phase of modern India. The original Hindu Hruday Samrat, who scripted the BJP's rise on the crest of the Ram temple movement, Advani's legacy is celebrated as much for bringing nationalism to the centre stage of Indian politics as it is criticised for stoking communal passions. The greatest irony of his chequered career was that he was kept away from the celebrations surrounding the consecration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya in January 2024, the culmination of the nationwide mass movement he had spearheaded more than three and a half decades earlier. Likewise, the Prime Minister's Office remained elusive throughout his political life. He was the eternal number two during the Vajpayee era and was later outmanoeuvred by his own protégé, Narendra Modi. His prime ministerial ambitions were finally extinguished when the BJP chose Modi to lead the party into the 2014 general elections. Soon afterwards, Advani, along with other senior leaders, was relegated to the Margadarshak Mandal, a glorified retirement home with no meaningful role in the party's decision-making. Yet, a decade later, he was conferred the Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian honour. Advani remains the original charioteer who steered the BJP to national prominence during his years at the helm of the organisation, with his nationwide Rath Yatra permanently altering India's political landscape. The legacy of the BJP patriarch is complex, multi-layered, and open to widely differing interpretations.

Advani's brand of politics continues to evoke sharply divergent reactions. Many admire him for inspiring a cultural awakening among Hindus and for blending religious identity with a broader nationalist narrative. In contrast, others hold him responsible for deepening social polarisation and fuelling communal tensions in the aftermath of the Babri Masjid demolition. In the present era of muscular Hindutva, however, Advani's political approach appears to have lost much of its earlier resonance. In a blog post published in 2019 and titled "Nation First, Party Next, Self Last", he cautioned the BJP against pursuing muscular majoritarianism and what he described as faux nationalism.

He strongly disapproved of the tendency to brand critics as enemies of the nation. However impressive his achievements may have been over a political career spanning nearly seven decades, both in the organisation and in government, certain moments exposed its inherent paradoxes. Despite being the face of the party for decades and the natural choice to lead it into the 2014 elections, he lost the internal leadership contest to a more charismatic Modi, who embodied a more aggressive version of Hindutva politics.

Rare tiger sighting gives hope to Odisha sanctuary looking to house big cats

A rare sighting has put Odisha's Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary on alert, after a Royal Bengal Tiger was captured on camera traps and also spotted by a patrolling team on Monday.The development marks a significant milestone for Debrigarh, which has earlier been identified by the state government as a potential habitat for the proposed translocation of two big cats from central India.Authorities said surveillance has been stepped up across Debrigarh, with patrolling teams maintaining round-the-clock monitoring to track the tiger's movement and ensure its safety.

Confirming sighting of the big cat in Debrigarh, divisional forest officer of Hirakud Wildlife Division Anshu Pragyan Das said the tiger is suspected to have entered the sanctuary through Dechuan-Lakhanpur forest corridor. The pugmarks traced by forest officials indicate that the animal may have strayed into Odisha from Chhattisgarh, which shares a border with Debrigarh."We have deployed 100 trap cameras to monitor the movement of the tiger. A total of 27 teams have been deployed for daily patrolling along the sanctuary's boundary. Additionally, three-layer teams have been deployed for night-time patrolling," she added.Rare tiger sighting gives hope to Odisha sanctuary looking to house big cats Authorities said surveillance has been stepped up across Debrigarh.While the source of the big cat, its gender and other details are yet to be known, Debrigarh authorities said they will share camera trap images of the tiger for analysis with officials of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and the Wildlife Institute of India (WII). "The stripe pattern of the tiger will confirm its source," said an official.According to Das, it's the second sighting of a Royal Bengal Tiger in Debrigarh in the past four years, indicating the big cat's recurring presence in the sanctuary. "A big cat stayed in Debrigarh last during 2022-2024 for around 18 months. It died in Gomarda sanctuary in Chhattisgarh after it escaped from the Debrigarh sanctuary," said Das.According to wildlife experts, Debrigarh forms part of the tiger corridor connecting central India. They believe the sanctuary's healthy prey base comprising gaur, sambar, spotted deer and wild boar could be attracting big cats and making it a potential habitat for tigers.Experts, however, are doubtful whether the tiger will make Debrigarh its permanent home as a sub-adult male generally moves to new areas in search of a mate. "Since Debrigarh is a clear forest, it's likely to move around the sanctuary in search of a mate. If it fails to find one, it may eventually move out of the sanctuary," said a retired official.The Odisha government's proposal to declare Debrigarh's 804 sq/km area and its surrounding forests as a tiger reserve has already received an in-principle

3 workers die at iPhone parts factory in Tamil Nadu run by Tata

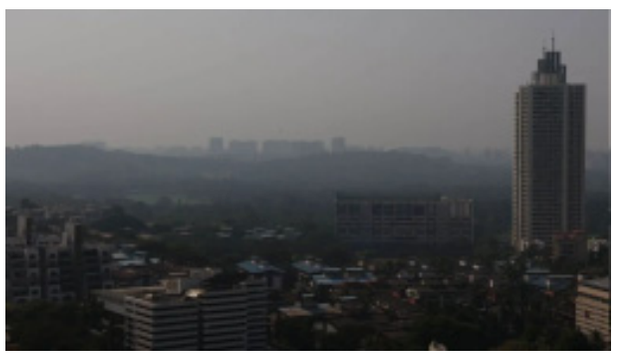


Three contract workers died on Monday evening while servicing a wastewater treatment tank at a Tata Electronics factory near Hosur, Tamil Nadu, that makes casings and other components for Apple's iPhones. Officials in Krishnagiri district said they suspected the workers had inhaled toxic gas. The police said the cause of death would be determined after post-mortem examinations.The plant, in Vanniyapuram near Uddanapalli, performs one of the more demanding jobs in Apple's effort to make more of its phones outside China. Its products include back panels and precision-machined metal casings. On premium smartphones, the casing serves as the frame on which other components are mounted, and its manufacture requires specialised tooling and surface finishing. A separate Tata plant in the same compound assembles finished iPhones. India now makes about a quarter of the world's iPhones, according to Reuters.

According to the office of the Krishnagiri district collector, the three men were part of a four-person maintenance crew. B Akmal was the first to collapse, after trying to look inside the filtration tank. M Sarathikumar went to check on him and also collapsed. P Kaveri then went in after the two men. The fourth worker called for help. All three were pulled out and taken to a private hospital in Hosur, where they were pronounced dead.A top official attached to the Directorate of Industrial Safety and Health told The Indian Express that the crew lacked proper safety measures for the work. "A unit of the American company Ecolab, Nalco Water, operated the treatment plant and had engaged another company through a subcontract that employed the men. The bodies were taken to the Government Medical College Hospital in Krishnagiri for post-mortem examinations. We are conducting a detailed inquiry today," the official said.

The district administration opened an inquiry. Apple and Tata have also ordered an investigation. The factory was already closed for Deepavali when the accident happened.A fire in a chemical storage area in September 2024 had halted component production at the Hosur site. At the time, the plant was the only Indian supplier of iPhone back panels to both Foxconn and Tata's own assembly operations. This year, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB), the pollution regulator, had intervened over allegations that wastewater had contaminated nearby farm wells. Tata said it had addressed the regulator's questions and that the board had dropped further action.

Why did Diwali leave one coastal city with 'poor' air?



Two coastal cities, the same festival, two very different readings. A day after Diwali, Mumbai stayed in the 'moderate' category with an Air Quality Index (AQI) of 172. Chennai recorded 'poor' air through Monday morning, with four of its seven operational monitoring stations above 200.The difference, scientists say, came down largely to which way the wind was blowing. In both cities, firecrackers released PM2.5, fine particles 2.5 micrometres or less that rise into the air and stay suspended in the lower atmosphere. What happened next depended on the weather.

What helped Mumbai?

Mumbai is surrounded by the sea on three sides, which gives it the advantage of wind reversal, with breezes moving between land and sea and dispersing pollutants held in the lower atmosphere.An anticyclonic circulation in the Himalayas has also brought easterly winds, which blow from the mainland towards the sea, to coastal regions of western India, including Mumbai.These winds have brought down the city's temperature and dispersed the pollutants suspended in the air. Their continued onset over the past two days has helped Mumbai and eight other cities in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region stay in the 'moderate' category despite heavy cracker bursting.

What went wrong in Chennai?Mumbai looks out on the Arabian Sea to its west. Chennai, on the south-eastern coast, faces the Bay of Bengal to its east, so the same wind has the opposite effect. Easterlies would bring Chennai cleaner air from the sea, but the city is not getting them.Thick smog engulfs the SDAT Tennis Stadium in Chennai caused by firecracker celebrations during Diwali, ahead of the singles final of the WTA 250 Chennai Open tennis tournament, in Chennai. (PTI Photo) Thick smog engulfs the SDAT Tennis Stadium in Chennai caused by firecracker celebrations during Diwali, ahead of the singles final of the WTA 250 Chennai Open tennis tournament, in Chennai. (PTI Photo)Strong northerly winds are instead blowing in from inland Andhra Pradesh and northern Tamil Nadu, carrying pollutants from industrial and urban centres. As firecracker emissions stayed suspended in the lower atmosphere, those winds added to the load.Experts expect that could change soon, with easterlies from the Bay of Bengal likely to set in, bringing cleaner air and helping pollutants disperse.

Inland, no relief at allWithout the sea, Maharashtra's hinterland fared worse than either city. As many as 13 cities recorded 'poor' or 'very poor' air a day after Diwali: Pimpri Chinchwad, Nanded, Pune, Malegaon, Nagpur, Jalna, Parbhani, Jalgaon, Nashik, Akola, Belapur, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar and Chandrapur.Mumbai vs other cities' AQI (Express GFX) Mumbai vs other cities' AQI (Express GFX)These cities do not benefit from the same winds. El Niño conditions have brought deficient rainfall and persistently high temperatures since October. The sustained heat has disrupted wind reversal, limiting natural ventilation and trapping pollutants for longer.Industry adds to the burden. Pune and Pimpri Chinchwad have automobile, pharmaceutical and heavy engineering industries, Nagpur has steel, engineering and power, Chandrapur has thermal power plants and mining, and Jalna has agro-processing and manufacturing. Combined with firecracker smoke and the weather, these emissions pushed air quality into the 'poor' and 'very poor' categories.

Social activist Bunker Roy, who founded Barefoot College, dies at 81



In a statement, his family members and fellow activists said that "Bunker Roy passed away peacefully at 6.15 am this morning with Aruna (Roy) and others around him. He went as he wanted to, in his own home in Tilonia, surrounded by some of the countless people who loved and cared for him deeply and passionately and admired him for his extraordinary lifelong contribution to people, society, India, and the planet."

Who was Bunker Roy?

Born Sanjit Roy in 1945 in an upper middle class Bengali family, Roy was educated at premier Doon School and St. Stephens College in Delhi. He was also India's squash champion thrice and life seemed comfortable. However, a visit to Bihar during the famine in the mid-1960s upended his worldview; as he told The Indian Express in 2015: "I went to the wrong school, wrong college and came back with a lot of arrogance.""After my education, I had a lot of fancy degrees and was told that I could overcome any problem. Then I went to a village in Bihar to help with the famine in 1966, and that experience of not being able to adapt to even a small village changed my life," he said.He then spent nearly a year and a half traveling across the country, studying the voluntary agencies, formulating his own plans, and eventually settling in Tilonia, where he started an experimental school that would teach basic applications of engineering, medicine and arts to villagers.It was driven by Gandhian philosophy that technology should be demystified, and its control decentralised and put into the hands of the rural poor; that there is a difference between literacy and education; that marginalised women should be given equal opportunities to learn; and that we should attempt to conserve our local knowledge.

Cut to 2010, and he was named as one of top 100 most influential people in the world by Time magazine in the 'Thinkers' category, one of the many recognitions and awards he received since he founded the College. Last year, King Charles III of the United Kingdom had written to Roy saying that "I am constantly singing your praises whenever I can, especially in Africa. There is much to discuss as I have many initiatives going on around the world…" Prince Charles, as he then was, had first visited the Barefoot Collège in November 1975, and then again in February 1992 together with Princess Diana.Officially, the Barefoot College "empowers rural marginalised communities worldwide by providing them with access to sustainable solutions in the areas of water, solar, education, health, livelihoods and environment."In life and often in work, he was complemented by his wife, eminent activist Aruna Roy, a former IAS officer who left the service for social activism and was a key architect of the grassroots movement that led to the Right to Information Act in 2005.

Woman killed as auto rams into parked lorry in Hayathnagar

Hyderabad: A 26-year-old woman was killed and two others injured after an autorickshaw carrying scrap material rammed into a stationary lorry near Sangam Hotel in Hayathnagar in the early hours of Monday.

According to the police, the victim was identified as Yadavalli Padma. She was travelling in the autorickshaw along with Revelli Durgamma from Bhagya towards Pedda Amberpet when the accident occurred.

"The autorickshaw driver reportedly failed to notice a lorry parked on the road without indicators or adequate warning signs and crashed into it. Padma died on the spot due to the impact," the police said.Durgamma suffered serious injuries to her shoulder, while the autorickshaw driver also sustained bleeding injuries. Both were shifted to Neeladri Hospital in an ambulance for treatment.Based on a complaint, the Hayathnagar police registered a case and initiated an investigation into the circumstances leading to the accident. The police are also investigating the alleged negligence of the lorry driver, who reportedly parked the vehicle on the road without taking adequate safety precautions.

Mangaluru-Bengaluru Vande Bharat Express launch likely on November 13



Mangaluru-Bengaluru Vande Bharat Express launch: Indian Railways is likely to launch a Vande Bharat Express between Mangaluru and Bengaluru on November 13. The new semi-high-speed train is expected to reduce travel time between the two cities and improve rail connectivity for passengers. The train will be operated and maintained by the South Western Railway (SWR) zone."Mangaluru-Bengaluru Vande Bharat Express is likely to be launched on Friday, November 13," a senior railway official told Indianexpress.com.

During the flagging-off ceremony of the Bengaluru-Mumbai Vande Bharat Sleeper train on November 1, 2026, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced that Vande Bharat services between Bengaluru and Mangaluru are expected to begin within the next few weeks. He said the service would be launched after the completion of electrification work and successful testing on the route."The service will strengthen connectivity between Bengaluru and coastal Karnataka. The new service would provide faster, more comfortable and world-class rail connectivity to the region," he said.Electrification of the Bengaluru-Mangaluru rail route was completed in December 2025, with an electric locomotive trial conducted on December 28, 2025. The electrification work began in December 2023.The project involved the construction of five switching stations and the installation of a complete overhead electrification system. To ensure safety and reliability, the maximum distance between traction poles was maintained at 67.5 metres.Earlier, in a statement highlighting the impact of electrification of the ghat section, the Railway Minister said: "Now we will be able to run a Vande Bharat train through this route to Mangaluru."Currently, more than 160 Vande Bharat train services (Chair Car) are operational across the Indian Railways network. These trains are indigenously developed and equipped with modern coaches, advanced safety features and passenger amenities. The new Mangaluru-Bengaluru Vande Bharat Express train will have following features:

Jammu traders confront BJP leaders over fire losses



It was meant to be a visit to express sympathy with traders who have incurred massive losses in the Diwali night fire. But a team of BJP legislators, led by the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the J&K Legislative Assembly, had to face a peculiar situation when the businessmen at the Warehouse Complex wholesale market here on Monday confronted them for what they termed as the leaders' "failure to safeguard the interests of the people of Jammu".

"You always sit on dharna outside Legislative Assembly, but why did you not hold sit-in for those whose livelihood has been snatched on Diwali day?'' Deepak Gupta, president of the Warehouse Traders Federation, asked LoP Sunil Sharma."You will also leave after giving us assurances like the government," Gupta said.

Earlier in the day, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed grief over large-scale damage to property in the fire incidents in the region and directed the officials to immediately help the affected people.Commercial establishments and residential houses valued at nearly Rs 100 crore were gutted in fire incidents at more than 60 places during Diwali celebrations across Jammu division.The Warehouse Complex bore a significant brunt after the fire that broke out in one of the establishments around 9.15 pm soon spread to nearby shops.The Warehouse Complex is one of the oldest commercial wholesale markets of J&K mainly dealing in foodgrains, edible oil, essential commodities and other items of daily use.

Gupta also invoked Article 370 and claimed that despite it being abrogated "with the support of the people of Jammu", it is "only they (Jammu residents) who have suffered in the past 12 years''.Addressing Sharma, Gupta said, "LoP sahib, when you could not get justice for people whose 29 shops got gutted in the fire at Shiv market, what will you do for us?''He was referring to the October 25 fire near the railway station that resulted in losses to the tune of several crores.Referring to the visit of PDP supremo Mehbooba Mufti, Gupta said she has done her role as an Opposition."You should have held a dharna at the house of the CM … All your (BJP's) 29 MLAs should have held a sit-in at the CM's residence to get justice for the 29 shopkeepers whose establishments were reduced to ashes at Shiv Market,'' Gupta said.

Pointing out that they have no hope from either the government or the Opposition, Gupta said the trader community would help Shiv Market shopkeepers rebuild their lives on their own.Expressing displeasure that the Warehouse shopkeepers could not get 500 kanals of land for construction of godowns, Gupta, turning to BJP MP Jugal Kishore, said: "Chair is not permanent."The other shopkeepers who spoke on the occasion, too, were critical of the functioning of the legislators. The outbursts assume significance coming from people living in areas considered traditional strongholds of the country's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).Later, LoP Sharma announced that all 29 BJP MLAs will contribute from their Constituency Development Funds to aid shopkeepers impacted by the fire at the complex, besides pushing the

Indian Hotels, Ambuja plan Rs 2,700-crore hospitality expansion across West Bengal



Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) and Ambuja Neotia Group have announced plans to invest Rs 2,700 crore in hospitality projects across West Bengal, with several new properties planned in North Bengal, including Siliguri, Ghum, Kalimpong and Lataguri.The proposed expansion comes as hotel operators look beyond established destinations such as Darjeeling and Siliguri.On November 1, the partnership unveiled an expanded Taj Chia Kutir Resort & Spa at Makaibari tea estate near Darjeeling. The property, which opened in 2020, has added 28 rooms and 15,000 sq ft of banqueting space at an investment of Rs 100 crore.

IHCL Managing Director Puneet Chhatwal said tourism was gradually extending beyond traditional circuits, aided by improved highways, air connectivity and changing travel habits.“From here till Darjeeling, there is nothing that comes in the way, practically nothing, so there is a lot to be done,” he told The Indian Express, pointing to opportunities in destinations such as Ghum and Kalimpong.He said the Covid-19 pandemic had changed domestic travel patterns, with more people opting for self-drive holidays, extended weekends and more frequent trips. Developing tourism markets in eastern and north-eastern India, he said, would be a “10-to-20-year journey”, with travellers from cities such as Mumbai, Delhi and Bengaluru emerging as potential customers.At the tea lounge, tea sommeliers introduce guests to Darjeeling varieties (Special arrangement) At the tea lounge, tea sommeliers introduce guests to Darjeeling varieties (Special arrangement)The North Bengal pipeline includes the 57-room Taj Himya Kutir and 10 branded villas in Ghum, the 140-room Taj Terai Kutir in Siliguri and the 30-room Taj Vanya Kutir in Lataguri. Other planned properties include AltAir House hotels in Kalimpong and Lataguri and a Tree of Life property in Siliguri.

Ambuja Neotia chairman Harshavardhan Neotia said a change in West Bengal government policy after the pandemic had allowed tourism-related development on tea-estate land. “The state allowed 15 per cent of tea-estate land to be used for tourism-related activities,” he said.Chhatwal said the expansion would require coordinated planning between the government and private investors. Development in the hills, he said, would need proper environmental impact assessments and construction planning. Sourcing supplies, developing local talent, managing water resources and dealing with prolonged monsoons were among the operational challenges.The partnership also launched AltAir House hotels in Kolkata and Siliguri on October 31, with 42 and 60 rooms, respectively. Further projects are planned in Kolkata, Raichak and Digha.

The experienceThe experience at Taj Chia Kutir begins with a traditional welcome, as Nepali women greet guests with folk songs. Spread across 22 acres of the Makaibari Tea Estate, the resort offers rooms that combine understated luxury with sweeping views of the surrounding landscape.

The rooms feature wooden interiors, plush furnishings and large windows (Special arrangement) The rooms feature wooden interiors, plush furnishings, and large windows (Special arrangement)The accommodation ranges from garden-view rooms of around 45 sq m to expansive suites and villas. The larger options include the 120-sq-m Luxury Valley View Suite and the 118-sq-m Villa Suite, while the Presidential Makaibari Suite comes with a private gazebo.The rooms feature wooden interiors, plush furnishings and large windows that bring the landscape indoors. Private balconies and decks, furnished with small tables and chairs, offer a place to enjoy a cup of tea as the green slopes disappear beneath a soft cap of clouds. Bathrooms with bathtubs, bath oils and salts add to the indulgence.

The resort’s approach to luxury also extends to responsible hospitality. Guests are encouraged to reuse towels to conserve water, while single-use plastic bottles are avoided in favour of refillable drinking water arrangements and glass bottles.After sunset, the sounds of crickets and other insects fill the air. Away from the bustle of city life, a clear night offers a sky dotted with stars, a sight increasingly rare in urban settings.

Tea takes centre stage. At the tea lounge, tea sommelier Parvez Hussain introduces guests to Darjeeling varieties, including Makaibari First Flush Springtime Bloom, Second Flush Summer Solstice, White Tea Bai Mudan and Silver Tips Imperial. Guests can also walk through the plantation and try plucking tea leaves. Priced at around Rs 1.1 lakh per kg, Silver Tips Imperial comes with an intriguing anecdote from Parvez about how the Queen of England reportedly drank it, believing it would help her live longer.Evenings bring flute recitals and Buddhist monk chanting against the backdrop of tea gardens, followed by morning yoga overlooking mist-covered plantations.

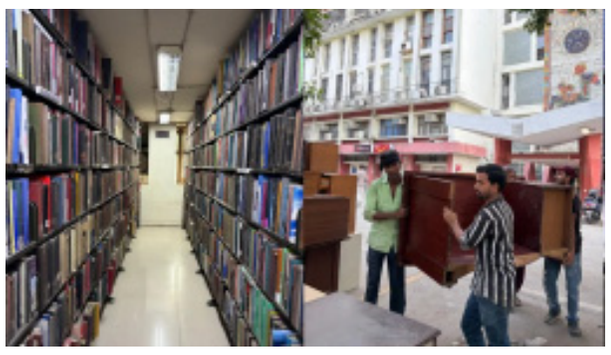
Desperate, troubled, has no answers: Opposition slams PM Narendra Modi over ‘dimagi Naxal’ jibe



Targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his “dimagi Naxalites” remark during Diwali celebrations at a CRPF camp in Karanpur in Chhattisgarh’s Bastar district, the Opposition Monday said that Modi has no answers to the questions they are raising while challenging him again to a debate on “who is anti-national and who is controlled by foreign forces”.In a post on X, Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi said that the CRPF personnel in the audience “didn’t buy the PM’s lies”. “Dear CRPF jawans, your faces said it all: you didn’t buy the PM’s lies… He called us Naxals.”“My challenge stands. Let him debate me on who is anti-national and who is controlled by foreign forces. Any time, any place,” Gandhi said.

He said it was his “guarantee that after the debate, the PM won’t have the guts to stand in front of a single jawan again”. On multiple occasions earlier, Gandhi has “challenged” the PM to an “open debate” with him.On Sunday, Modi said, “Armed Naxalites have vanished from the forests, but intellectual (dimagi) Naxalites have captured many organisations. Even today, they are provoking people against the Constitution and democracy of the country. These intellectual Naxalites have also infiltrated several political parties and various organisations. We must identify them, defeat them, and secure the nation.”Congress MP and party’s communication in charge, Jairam Ramesh, said that the “PM has not spared the country his usual abusive language even on Diwali”.“Once again, he has called some of his political opponents ‘intellectual Naxals’. Most objectionable is that he abused an extremely solemn and non-political occasion for this, wore the uniform of the security forces, and hurled a barrage of mud at his political opponents. This is an open assault on all norms of propriety and tradition. But when have these gentlemen ever cared about principles and ideals?” said Ramesh.“The PM is clearly desperate, troubled, and restless. It is clear that the time to pack up is fast approaching,” he said.TMC Deputy Leader in the Rajya Sabha, Sagarika Ghose, told The Indian Express, “The truth is plain: instead of debating the real issues of our times including the expose into the functioning of the Election Commission and its impact on India’s constitutional democracy, Modi is engaging in name calling the Opposition and defaming those who are defending the Constitution.”“Name-calling is the last refuge of those who have much to hide and the clearest sign that the Modi government today has no answers to the direct questions raised by the Opposition,” Ghose said.“Militarism and majoritarianism are the BJP’s core agendas”, CPI’s P Sandosh Kumar “The target is very clear. With this uncivilised speech, those who fight for people’s rights will be dealt with harsh methods. Modi should learn from the failure of his international associates like (US President Donald) Trump and (Benjamin) Netanyahu,” he said.

After Supreme Court scrutiny, Centre raises library allocation from 300 to 4,000 sq m



The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has allocated space for the Central Secretariat Library — currently housed in Shastri Bhawan, which is set to be demolished as part of the Central Vista redevelopment plan — at the government office complex in Netaji Nagar, On September 30, The Indian Express had reported that while all ministries and departments had been asked by the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) to vacate Shastri Bhawan by the end of September so that construction work could start, the library was yet to be allocated adequate space.

Taking suo motu cognizance of The Indian Express report, the Supreme Court, on October 5, had asked the government to file a detailed affidavit on its plans to relocate the library, including the area to be allocated and “actual layout plans”. The court is set to hear the matter on November 16.In an office memorandum issued on November 6, the Directorate of Estates, under MoHUA, said space had been allocated for the library at the Government Pool Office Accommodation (GPOA)-2, Netaji Nagar, which is about 7 kilometres from its current location.“The competent authority has approved the relocation of Central Secretariat Library, Ministry of Culture, to the newly built GPOA Block-02, Netaji Nagar,” it said.According to the office memorandum, the library has been allocated several rooms on the ground floor of the building. While it did not mention the size of the area, MoHUA sources said around 4,000 square metres of space had been set aside for the library.In January, the Directorate of Estates had allocated two rooms, covering about 300 square metres in total, for the library at Kartavya Bhawan-2. This was rejected by the Ministry of Culture as inadequate. The library currently occupies four floors of Shastri Bhawan, spanning nearly 5,500 square metres and containing 8.5 lakh books.When the Central Vista redevelopment project was being planned, the Ministry of Culture had written to MoHUA seeking adequate space for the library in the revamped Central Secretariat.

“It is, therefore, requested that an overall space of approx 5,466 square metres may be allocated in the Common Central Secretariat… with architecturally theme based building in view of easy and smooth access of (the) library to all ministries/ departments located in the Central Vista,” Govind Mohan, who was then the Culture Secretary, had written to MoHUA on September 12, 2023. Mohan is currently the Home Secretary.MoHUA had written to the Culture Ministry on January 16 this year saying that “the competent authority” had approved allocation of two rooms in KB-2 for the library.In a post on X on October 1, MoHUA had said: “Contrary to a few reports, it is clarified that space for the Central Secretariat Library has been provided for in the Kartavya Path redevelopment plan. The necessary process for construction of the library is underway.”The library dates back to 1891, when it was founded as the Imperial Secretariat Library in Kolkata. When the British decided to move the capital to Delhi in 1911, the library was shifted to the Old Secretariat Building in Civil Lines first and then to North Block when it was constructed in the 1930s. After Independence, the library was renamed Central Secretariat Library and has been located at Shastri Bhawan since 1969.Shastri Bhawan and Krishi Bhawan are set for demolition as part of the Central Vista redevelopment plan. Two new office complexes will be constructed at the site. The CPWD recently awarded the contract for redevelopment of the two buildings to L&T, which said in a press release on October 21 that the “project is scheduled for completion in 24 months, followed by a five-year operation and maintenance period.”

hy small churches in Maharashtra are holding back



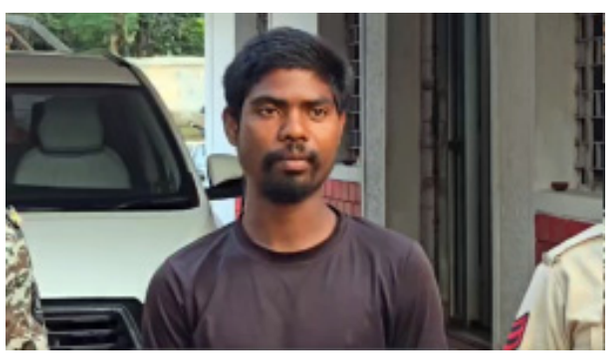
Vacation Bible School (VBS) is typically a time for fun and learning, featuring songs, games, crafts, and Bible stories for children. This event often takes place during summer or the Diwali break. However, this year, several Protestant churches across Maharashtra are approaching it with caution. Following disruptions at prayer meetings, some churches are either cancelling VBS or restricting attendance to just Christian children in an effort to avoid complications or allegations of conversion.Christian children aged 5 to 15 usually join VBS alongside friends from different faiths. Church leaders from various regions, including Mumbai and Nagpur, shared their experiences with The Sunday Express. Some pastors in the Mumbai region have chosen to cancel VBS entirely, while others are proceeding but limiting participation to Christian kids. They are implementing measures like banners, registration, and fees to show no child was lured in.

The caution follows Sunday disruptions at prayer meetings in rented halls, schools and homes in the Mumbai region by people identifying themselves as Bajrang Dal or VHP workers alleging conversion. Nine FIRs followed five such incidents between April and July, seven against organisers and worshippers. The state’s anti-conversion law, which makes whoever facilitates a conversion prove it was voluntary, took effect August 28. Ahead of it, as The Indian Express first reported on August 25, pastors had begun taking signed forms from worshippers saying they attend freely.Maharashtra anti-conversion law Worshippers at New Hope Church in Virar with self-declaration forms stating they are attending the prayer meeting of their own choice.

Bishop Prakash D Patole, who leads the CNI’s Marathwada Diocese, mentioned, “For the first time, this year, we have suggested to the protestant churches in our state to not hold VBS during the Diwali break.”This guidance mainly targets smaller churches that operate in rented venues. Leaders believe these places are particularly vulnerable, as gatherings in rented spaces can more easily be misrepresented as covert conversion meetings. The disruptions reported so far have taken place at these locations. Patole confirmed his own church, which owns property, will still host VBS but exclusively for Christian children.Dr. Shakti Waghe, a member of the CNI Mumbai pastorate committee, noted that many churches in the city are skipping VBS this Diwali, although there’s been no formal mandate from CNI. Robin Salve, secretary of the Nasik and Ahilyanagar CNI diocese, added, “We are living in such a tough time that any programme we hold, we will be questioned.”Rev. Tennison Peter, executive secretary of the Methodist Churches in Maharashtra, stated that pastors in the Mumbai region have been advised to be vigilant and post notices specifying the program is for Christian children only.Some churches have opted to cancel their VBS. In Vasai-Virar, which has seen five of the nine FIRs, Pastor Ravi Gupta of Masih Ekta Foundation, who has faced four FIRs this year, decided not to hold VBS. “Just this month we sought police permission to hold Sunday prayers from a new venue, we cannot risk it with children that’s why we didn’t have VBS in summer vacation and will not hold in Diwali vacation also.”Mira-Bhayandar, too, has opted out of hosting summer VBS for the first time. Pastor Ashish Rao, president of the Maharashtra Christian Forum, said, “Around 90 per cent of pastors in the area operate from rented premises. After The Indian Express report, luckily the disruptions have stopped, so we are discussing to hold the programmes as we have resumed all our Sunday prayers too.”Churches that are going ahead are building a paper trail including banners saying “VBS for church children or only Christian children”, and for the first time, registration with a fee of Rs 50 or Rs 100 as proof parents sent them willingly.“We have advised all the churches to adapt to measures such as registering children in advance, installing CCTV cameras and keeping records of unfamiliar visitors. Those who want to hold VBS or any programme, they should make sure they have their own venue, children who come are Christian and baptized,” Patole said.Maharashtra anti-conversion law Children at a Vacation Bible School programme in Palghar last year. Such camps, with songs, games and Bible stories, are being scaled back this Diwali. (File Photo)

Rev Thomas Jacob, priest-in-charge of St Thomas Cathedral and CNI Mumbai Diocesan Secretary, said the cathedral will hold VBS, with a banner and registration for outsiders. “Churches like ours, which have their own premises, may be less vulnerable to such issues, but we really cannot say for sure. We have therefore instructed both small and large churches to exercise caution,” he said.“Some smaller churches are also charging a nominal registration fee of Rs 50 or Rs 100. This is another way of maintaining a record of every child attending the programme, so that if any issue arises, the church can establish that the child had enrolled by paying a fee and had not been lured into attending.”Pastor Anil George of Jeevan Jyoti Ministries, Mira-Bhayandar, expects around 300 children at a VBS from November 9 to 14. “We will not allow other faith children for the first time as precaution.” Pastor Sam K. Mathai, secretary of the Palghar Zilla Masih Sangati, said Vasai-Virar and Palghar pastors excluded children of other faiths in April for the first time, and will this Diwali too.The divide is property. Rev. Sunil Raut, secretary of the CNI’s Pune, Solapur, Latur and Osmanabad diocese, said, “At St Mary’s Church in Pune, we have our own premises so we don’t have any concerns as of now and we will hold VBS but this time only for Christian children alone. The issues are in small churches who don’t have their own property, they are advised to be careful.”Manjusha Stephenson, secretary of CNI Nagpur diocese and principal of Bishop Cotton School, said children of all faiths still attend All Saints Cathedral’s VBS, because it has its own school and property. “The caution is only for small churches.”Bishop Manoj Kate of the CNI Kolhapur diocese, who runs Miraj Christian Church, said rural Maharashtra still lives in harmony. “We did conduct during summer and we let our church building for other churches who want to hold VBS and do not have their own premises.”

Man kills nephew, removes organs to make a quick buck. His guide: AI app



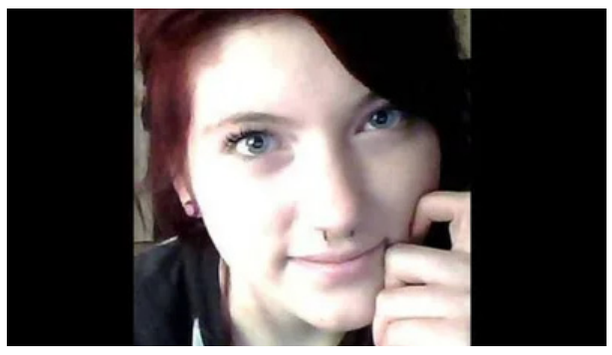
On November 6, Ramjeet Ram, a daily wage labourer in Chhattisgarh’s Jashpur district, woke up in his hut to find his four-year-old son missing.After a frantic search, the boy was found dead, around half a kilometre away, wrapped in a blanket inside a pit. Ram removed the blanket and was horrified to find the body in a mutilated state. The villagers alerted the police.The search for the accused, Basudev Korwa alias Tangnu, ended in Ram’s own family: His son was kidnapped and killed by his cousin. The accused thought he would be able to sell some of the boy’s organs to make a quick buck, said police.What left Ram, and the police, even more shocked was where Basudev got the idea to kill the four-year-old from: An Artificial Intelligence (AI) app.Police have arrested Basudev, 27, and have recovered the boy’s missing organs: kidneys, lungs and eyes.Basudev told police he had come across a video on social media about making money by selling organs. For the last 45 days, he had been interacting with an AI app to find ways to execute his plan.

Police said Ram (36) along with his wife and three children had migrated from their village, situated some 20 to 25 kms away, to Sanna to work in farms near a river dam a year ago. As a practice, they would build small huts on the farm where they worked before moving to their next jobs.Some time back, Basudev, Ram’s cousin from his mother’s side, also moved to Sanna village in search of work and started visiting his house.“Basudev, who was earning a paltry income, was looking to make fast money. He used to watch videos on social media and also interacted with AI apps. A month ago, he saw a video claiming that one could earn Rs 20 lakh by selling organs,” said Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP), Jashpur district, Rakesh Kumar Patanwar.This gave Basudev the idea to kill someone. He found his target in the most vulnerable person he knew: His four-year-old nephew.

His target locked, he again started scouring the internet and zeroed in on an AI app.“He interacted with the app through voice messages to find out ways he could earn money by selling organs. He believed a real person was responding to him on the app,” said ASP Patanwar, adding Basudev has no prior criminal record.Police said Basudev never spoke with any real person about his plan, adding that it was only through his interactions with the app that he started believing that an actual person would come down from Delhi to buy the organs from him.On November 5 night, Basudev lured the boy with chicken – a rare treat for a tribal family from an extremely poor background.Police said Basudev first intoxicated the boy with liquor, took him to his hut and waited for him to pass out. After this, he slit the boy’s throat and removed his kidneys, lungs and eyes.

“After burying the boy in a pit, Basudev came back home to deal with the organs. He brought a bucket, lined it with a plastic material, and placed the organs in it. He then covered them with a pair of jeans. He filled the bucket with mud and partially buried it at another place,” said an official.On how the police zeroed in on Basudev, police said a local resident had spotted him accompanying the boy before he disappeared.“We have an eyewitness who saw the boy with Basudev. We then caught him and he led us to the bucket with the organs inside,” said inspector Suman Toppo, in charge of Sanna police station.The police have recovered the murder weapon and sent the boy’s body and organs for an autopsy.

FBI offers fresh $25K reward in cold case of missing Oklahoma woman Paige Summer Moore



Agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) are asking for the public's help to solve a cold case of a missing Oklahoma woman, Paige Summer Moore, who was reported missing from her home in Broken Arrow when she was 17-years-old. According to officials, Moore has not been seen since July 10, 2012. Last year, her death was officially ruled a homicide.

Earlier in 2026, investigators with the Broken Arrow Police Department shared information involving a possible car involved in Moore's disappearance. The vehicle was described as a green 2002 Chevrolet Tracker with plate number 931KSW.The FBI is now offering a $25,000 reward for any information leading to the recovery of Moore, the arrest and conviction of the person(s) responsible for her disappearance.What we know about Paige Summer Moore's disappearanceFBI - Oklahoma City said in a Facebook post that Moore's family reported her missing in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma."A reward of up to $25k is being offered for information leading to her recovery and/or the arrest and conviction of the individual(s) responsible for her disappearance," said the post.The National Center For Missing & Exploited Children shared a photo that is shown age-progressed to 24 years."She may still be in the local area. Paige may have multiple facial piercings. She may dye her hair," wrote the website.Donna McIntyre, the CEO of Missing and Not Forgotten, a nonprofit organization based in Spencer, Indiana, that works to raise awareness for missing persons, homicide victims, and human trafficking cases, shared details about the case in a Facebook post. She said that Moore had her hair dyed with pink, red and purple coloring at the time of her disappearance. Her nose, ears and lip were pierced.

"When Paige went missing she left her residence in the 1100 Block of North Ironwood Avenue in the state of Oklahoma. She was scheduled to attend a summer school program that day. She took some of her belongings including her cellphone. According to her missing persons report she left on her own accord and her family members had stated she was mixed up with the wrong of friends," the post said.Anyone with information about Moore's case is urged to contact the FBI at (405) 290-7770, or submit an anonymous tip online attips.fbi.gov.

Trump after meeting Qatar PM says he believes war with Iran is 'effectively over'



Washington: US President Donald Trump on Monday told reporters he believes the war in Iran "militarily is effectively over." The president made a surprise visit to the White House briefing room after meeting with Qatar's prime minister earlier in the day."Iran militarily is effectively over," Trump said. "We're just keeping it the status quo." Trump added that Iran has been "decapitated" but said he is still looking to make sure there's a long-term solution to ensuring that Iran's nuclear programme is defanged.The president offered some of his most definitive comments about moving away from his threat to resume strikes on Iran after the US midterm elections passed.

The president's Republican Party lost both chambers of Congress to Democrats in last week's elections. The election was shadowed by dissatisfaction among the American electorate over the eight-month-old war, which has led to a surge in fuel prices that's impacted nearly ever sector of the global economy.Trump at his news conference added that there was "positive momentum" toward ending the war without going into detail."The military action doesn't seem to be a very necessary thing, but we're locked and loaded, ready to go for any reason that changes," Trump said.

Trump told CNN in a phone interview Sunday that as long as the US sees progress in negotiations with the Iranians and they sign a "strong agreement," it's "highly unlikely it's going to be necessary" to resume strikes.Trump said, however, that the US had identified infrastructure targets, including 38 bridges, that it would strike if military action resumes.The US military, meanwhile, still has carried out limited strikes on Iran, including against its air defences, at least twice over the past week.

Russia, Ukraine, US begin talks in Abu Dhabi today on peace deal amid rising tension

Senior officials from Russia, Ukraine and the US will convene in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday as part of Washington's bid to broker peace talks to end the ongoing conflict. Ahead of the trilateral, US President Donald Trump expressed optimism regarding the talks, as military attacks continue between Moscow and Kyiv.As the Russia-Ukraine war approaches its five-year mark, the 2-day session in the UAE marks the first round of talks between Russia and Ukraine since February, when the two sides met in Geneva.

Both Russia and Ukraine are sending veteran negotiators to the talks, selecting high-ranking officials with prior experience in peace summits.The Russian delegation is being led by a close aide to Putin, who has directed Moscow's negotiating team since the March 2022 Istanbul talks. The group also features Deputy Foreign Ministers Sergei Ryabkov and Mikhail Galuzin, Military Intelligence Chief Igor Kostyukov, and Yuri Zhigarlovsky, the deputy chief of the General Staff's operational department.The Ukrainian delegation is being headed by Rustem Umerov, the chief of Ukraine's Foreign Intelligence Service and a veteran of earlier negotiations. Reports indicate the team also includes Chief of Staff Kyrylo Budanov, his deputy Sergiy Kyslytsya, and Davyd Arakhamia, the parliamentary leader of Zelenskyy's Servant of the People party.Key issues at hand

A key area of disagreement between Russia and Ukraine is territorial control. Russian President Vladimir Putin demands that Ukraine surrender 4 annexed regions – Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson – the four regions that Moscow illegally annexed in September 2022 but never fully captured.He also demands that Ukraine abandon its bid to join NATO, accept strict limits on its military and drop restrictions on the Russian language and the Moscow-affiliated Orthodox Church in Ukraine.Putin insists on a complete peace deal based strictly on Russia's terms and refuses a temporary ceasefire, adding that a pause would only allow Ukrainian troops to rest and restock their arsenal.However, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has rejected demands to cede occupied territories or restrict the Ukrainian military. Ukraine insists that a ceasefire is the first step towards wider peace settlements. It says that a direct meeting between Putin and Zelenskyy is the only way to settle territorial issues.Tensions escalate over fresh attacksDespite diplomatic efforts, military hostilities between the two countries continued on Tuesday. A Ukrainian drone attack disrupted power supplies to the city of Luhansk and other parts of the Russian-controlled region, TASS reported, quoting Russian-installed authorities.Simultaneously, Russia's defence ministry said its forces had struck a cargo vessel and a tanker in the Black Sea, Interfax reported. Another cargo vessel was also hit east of the port of Odesa, according to the report.



Trump 'optimistic' about Russia-Ukraine talksUS President Donald Trump has expressed optimism over the trilateral talks, saying both countries are 'tired of fighting'."The meetings are going okay, but we are trying to get it settled only because it doesn't affect us as a country, but it affects me. 25,000 people a month are being killed," Trump said while addressing a press conference.Trump's son-in-law and member of the US delegation, Jared Kushner, said on X on Monday that a "comprehensive and lasting settlement will also require direct engagement between Russia and our European partners on the broader security arrangements that affect them."

Russia's top independent newspaper closes its office after three decades, citing official pressure

Moscow: Novaya Gazeta, Russia's most celebrated independent newspaper, closed its Moscow offices Monday, citing relentless pressure from government officials.It was the last major independent media outlet critical of the Kremlin that remained active in Russia. Others closed or moved their operations abroad after President Vladimir Putin sent troops into Ukraine in February 2022.In a statement published Oct. 30, the newspaper said the Russian authorities and the security services had "forced our editorial team to cease operations." "Human rights and freedoms have been abolished in this country, and defending them is now treated as a crime," the newspaper said.

"Elections and elected governing bodies have been effectively dismantled, civil society institutions have been wiped out, freedom of conscience and human dignity have been trampled underfoot."Launched in 1993, Novaya Gazeta quickly became known for its fierce reporting and dedication to uncovering Russian human rights abuses and corruption. Six of its journalists have been killed, including Anna Politkovskaya, who reported on atrocities during the second Chechen War at the start of Putin's first term as president. She was fatally shot in her apartment building in 2006.On the newspaper's final day in its office Monday, journalists slowly removed the portraits of their slain colleagues from the newsroom where reporters and editors planned their work.

Tatiana Britskaya, the editor of Novaya Gazeta's investigations desk, said she had expected the outlet's closure almost every day for the past 4 1/2 years. "It is an incredibly difficult decision, because this is more than a workplace, more than an office — this is our home, and we're losing it," she said.Novaya Gazeta had faced growing government pressure as the Kremlin cracked down on critics, with repression sharply intensifying after the start of the conflict in Ukraine.Longtime editor-in-chief Dmitry Muratov, who shared the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize with Philippine journalist Maria Ressa, was attacked on a train in 2022 by an assailant who poured red paint over



him, causing severe irritation in his eyes. Muratov stepped down as editor in 2023 after being named a "foreign agent" by Russian authorities. The designation carries strong pejorative connotations in the country and can bring additional government scrutiny.

The newspaper was fined after it was accused of discrediting Russia's armed forces, and it was also declared a foreign agent. Authorities blocked all of its online platforms, seized its printing house, revoked its media registration and shut down the donation system that allowed it to receive support from readers.In a final blow, the newspaper was ordered to clear out its Moscow offices.As reporters left the building and gathered in the street, a new sign was affixed atop the nameplate that once announced the newspaper's office. It read, "Here lived Novaya Gazeta." Sergei Sokolov, Novaya Gazeta's editor-in-chief, said he believed the newspaper would return one day "with renewed strength." "We will live, and I am sure that this country, caught in such a terrible era, will eventually stir. As soon as those first signs appear, Novaya Gazeta will return, to our readers and to our colleagues."Some of Novaya Gazeta's staff left Russia in 2022 and opened a separate project, Novaya Gazeta Europe. The new outlet has been sharply critical of the Kremlin and its military action in Ukraine.

Indian American Priya Sundareshan to lead Arizona Senate as Democrats gain control



Washington: Indian American Democrat Priya Sundareshan has been chosen to lead the Arizona Senate as her party prepares to take control of the chamber for the first time since 1992, promising lower costs for families and greater attention to Southern Arizona.Senate Democrats selected the Tucson lawmaker and outgoing minority leader as president-elect on November 6. She is set to take the gavel when the new Legislature convenes in January 2027.Democrats won 20 of the Senate's 30 seats. That would give the party a two-thirds majority, up from its current 13 seats.We heard you loud and clear. Arizonans rejected partisan extremism and chose a new direction," Sundareshan said in the leadership announcement."I am proud of what we accomplished together during my time as minority leader, and I'm ready to lead us into the next chapter."

The election also put Democrats on track to win about 37 of the House's 60 seats and returned Democratic Governor Katie Hobbs to office. Together, those results would give Democrats control of the governorship and both legislative chambers for the first time since 1966.House Democrats chose Oscar De Los Santos as speaker-elect.In an interview published Monday by KJZZ/Capitol Media Services, Sundareshan said her selection offered Southern Arizona a stronger voice in decisions made at the state Capitol in Phoenix."Southern Arizona has often complained about not having a representation in the majority at the legislature," she said. "Well, here we are."She is the first Tucsonan chosen to lead the Senate in nearly 20 years. The last Democrat to serve as Senate president was Pete Rios, who held the post from 1991 to 1992.University funding and roads are among the regional concerns facing the incoming leadership.Sundareshan said Democrats would seek to avoid further university funding cuts and ensure that areas outside Maricopa County received fair treatment in the budget.The incoming majority has identified lowering costs for working families as its leading priority."We're united in our commitment to earn your trust every day by delivering results you can feel in your daily life," she said.Sundareshan won re-election in District 18 with about 66 per cent of the vote.Born and raised in Tucson in an Indian American family, Sundareshan attended local public schools and earned a chemical engineering degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 2006. She received a law degree and a master's degree in agricultural and resource economics from the University of Arizona in 2011.Before entering the Legislature, she taught natural resources law at the University of Arizona and directed its Natural Resource Use and Management Clinic. She also worked on sustainable resource management with the Environmental Defense Fund. First elected in 2022, she took office in January 2023.

Hydraa receives 36 complaints over illegal borewells

Hyderabad: Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency (Hydraa) received 36 complaints about illegal borewells, encroachments and other civic issues during its Prajavani programme at theBudha Bhavan premises on Monday.

Residents sought the removal of illegal borewells near lakes, alleging that some operators, claiming the water was for personal use, deployed tankers and secretly sold it at night. They said groundwater extraction was depriving households of their regular water supply.

Residents also alleged that large quantities of water were being extracted from Thummalakunta Lake in Keesara mandal through borewells and sold. They further alleged that encroachments were taking place within the lake's Full Tank Level (FTL) limits, a press release said.Hydraa Commissioner AV Ranganath assigned the complaints to the officials concerned for immediate action, the press release said.

Trump says FBI looking into Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang's affair with 'Chinese agent'

Washington: US President Donald Trump said Monday that the FBI is investigating Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang's affair with an alleged Chinese government agent, but said he doesn't think the executive who has helped to develop artificial intelligence has a reason to worry."I know the FBI is looking into it in terms of something else, and I think that he'll be in good shape," Trump said at a White House briefing.

The sudden emergence of Huang's infidelity has rocked the political class and America's tech sector, creating new concerns about whether China has been able to access the cutting-edge chips designed by Nvidia that are powering the development of artificial intelligence.Trump suggested the extraordinary step of directly involving himself in a counterintelligence investigation, a sign of his friendly relationship with Huang and the possible geopolitical stakes."I did speak to him today just to see if he's feeling all right, how you're doing," Trump said. "He said he had absolutely no idea that the person in question was a spy." Huang — a singular figure in the technology landscape and one of the world's wealthiest people — has acknowledged he had an affair, issuing an apology to his wife and to the company in an open letter posted on Nvidia's website. The New York Times reported that US intelligence determined that the woman was gathering information for Beijing."I support the investigation and will cooperate fully. I love our country and our company. I am committed to protecting NVIDIA and supporting America's national security," Huang said in his letter.Nvidia announced Sunday it was conducting an independent investigation into reports that Huang was the "target of a foreign intelligence effort." The episode also is attracting congressional scrutiny, with top Democrats Sen. Mark Warner and Rep. Hakeem Jeffries saying Monday they are interested in investigating it further. Jeffries said the Nvidia issue came up during a closed-door session with the CIA director and the Director of National Intelligence that was primarily about Iran."We're going to need a full briefing, specifically as it relates to the Nvidia issue, so we can all get to the bottom of what has happened," he said, "and what the implications are in terms of America's national security."China has denied plot to ensnare Nvidia chiefTrump is slated to meet next week with Chinese leader Xi Jinping in Shenzhen, China, at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, but he was noncommittal about bringing up the situation with Xi.

"No, I don't think so," Trump said. "I mean, maybe. I'm sure President XI will ask me about it. I just know Jensen very well. I just think he's a very honourable man." FBI counterintelligence investigations often examine efforts by foreign powers to spy on the United States, whether by surreptitiously stealing technology designed by American companies, covertly waging foreign influence campaigns aimed at shaping public opinion or cultivating relationships with powerful political and industry figures. Such investigations can take years and do not necessarily culminate in criminal charges. China has been regarded across presidential administrations of both political parties as a persistent counterintelligence threat.China denied Monday that it engaged in an attempt to ensnare Huang. "The so-called Chinese spy allegation is unsubstantiated. It is nothing but smears against China," Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Guo Jiakun said.Beijing earlier had dismissed The New York Times report saying Huang had developed a close relationship with a Chinese citizen named Alice Huang, who ran a company that last year faced claims it was illicitly shipping advanced Nvidia computer chips into China.

Huang and Nvidia play a critical role in the artificial intelligence industry as many of the world's leading AI developers rely on the company's specialised chips to power their systems. Huang has also helped persuade Trump to take a lighter touch on regulating AI, arguing that existing laws could cover any security issues stemming from the technology and that individual companies should behave responsibly with the products they develop and release.Huang also has lobbied Washington to loosen limits on sales of Nvidia chips to China in recent years, winning Trump's approval for selling its H200 chips this year. It's unclear if Beijing would allow Chinese companies to buy those chips in large quantities. Nvidia said in a regulatory filing in August that it has sold only a small amount to China as such sales are restricted by the Chinese government.The H200 chips are not Nvidia's most cutting-edge models, but they are still advanced. Previously, Huang also lobbied Trump to be allowed to sell Nvidia's less-advanced H20 chips, which were designed to comply with US export restrictions on China.In an exclusive interview with The Associated Press in June, Huang said: "National security should always be the top concern of all technologies. But having said that, you know, you have to be very specific about the risk that you're concerned about, before setting up policies for export controls." Nvidia shares dropped more than 4 per cent in trading Monday. Nvidia stock has shed roughly 11 per cent of its value since last Wednesday.

Many offices in Singapore were closed Monday for a holiday. Megaspeed and the Singapore Ministry of Home Affairs did not immediately reply to requests for comment.Nvidia is one of the world's most valuable publicly traded companies, alongside Apple and Microsoft. Its sales of computer chips to China have at times been targeted by US regulators seeking to limit Beijing's access to such technology."The key questions are whether he was aware of any espionage activities and whether any confidential or strategically sensitive information was compromised," said George Chen, a partner and chair of digital practice at The Asia Group, a Washington-based consultancy."Those questions require evidence rather

Lucknow under water: 25,000 affected as Gomti floods homes, landmarks



Soni Kashyap walked along a street filled with knee-deep water in Lucknow's Faizullahganj, hauling a blanket, an LPG cylinder and ration. She was taking them to a relative's house, where she and her family are sheltering after their home went under water."Khet bechkar ghar banaya hai. Kaise chhod dein? (We sold our agricultural land to build this house. How can we leave it?)," she said.For over a week, the swollen Gomti has submerged parts of northern Lucknow, affecting around 5,000 families — nearly 25,000 people — in Faizullahganj, Dawood Nagar, Loharmau and Banarsi Hotel.

The flooding is the worst the city has seen since 2018. Its effects extended beyond the Gomti's immediate floodplain, with waterlogging reported in parts of southern Lucknow on Wednesday around Phoenix Palassio Mall and Ekana Stadium, along Shaheed Path and in parts of Gomti Nagar Extension.Lucknow floods The Rashtra Prerna Sthal, spread across 65 acres, next to the Gomti river embankment on Hardoi Road on the outskirts of Lucknow, is also flooded. The Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) deployed 26 pumping sets to drain floodwater from the affected areas and plugged the point where river water was entering the planned area with a temporary barrier of boulders and soil. The waterlogging had eased considerably by 5 pm on Thursday, the authority said.The flooding has also affected public spaces along the river. The 65-acre Rashtriya Prerna Sthal remains inundated, with water submerging parts of its grounds and garden pathways. The complex houses 65-foot bronze statues of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Syama Prasad Mookerjee and Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya.The riverfront, the CG City Urban Wetland and Nau Sena Shaurya Vatika have been closed to visitors until further orders as a precautionary measure, officials said.Officials expect water levels to begin receding from Friday.Lucknow floods In Faizullahganj, several residents have vacated their houses as the water flooded their homes. (Express Photo by Visahl Srivastav)The trouble began towards the last week of September, around 100 km upstream, after a spell of heavy rain in the Gomti's upper catchment areas.Speaking to The Indian Express, Anil Garg, Principal Secretary, Irrigation Department, said, "The river's catchment areas are spread over Pilibhit, Shahjahanpur, Lakhimpur Kheri and Sitapur districts that witnessed exceptionally heavy rainfall between September 22 and 27. Normally, the rainfall over five days would be around 15 mm. This time it was around 150 mm, with some places receiving nearly 257 mm."

The water took several days to travel downstream to Lucknow, with officials saying it normally takes around 10-12 days to reach the city from the Pilibhit region, even after rainfall there has stopped.Additional District Magistrate (ADM) (City) M P Singh, the nodal officer overseeing relief operations in the affected area, said the water level had stabilised and was expected to recede over the next two to three days.Lucknow floods On Wednesday, the area around Phoenix Palassio mall and Ekana Stadium was waterlogged.

He added that around 2,250 houses had been affected in one stretch, while nearly 1,600 people had been affected in Barawan Kala and Jaita. Another 1,000 people were affected as water levels rose over the preceding three days.LDA Vice-Chairman Prathamesh Kumar told The Indian Express that while the temporary embankment had helped check the backflow, water would take time to recede from low-lying areas. Parts of Gomti Nagar Extension, including Sector 7, had escaped inundation, he said, even as much of the riverfront and adjoining structures remained under water.The flooding has brought renewed attention to the vulnerability of settlements along the Gomti. Faizullahganj, located on the river's floodplain, has seen a rise in concrete housing over the past two decades, exposing more homes to the risk of inundation when the river swells, an official said.The LDA Vice-Chairman added that the rise in the Gomti and flooding of the riverfront to this extent had last been seen in 1982.

Residents, however, continued to struggle with immediate problems of displacement, disrupted electricity and access to essentials.For Soni, the flooding has compounded an already precarious life. Originally from Hardoi, she moved to Lucknow a few years ago. Her husband died recently, and she now works as a house cook to support her children and grandchild.Over the past 10 days, she watched in dismay as the water outside her home rose steadily. After the electricity was cut, she moved to a relative's house. "But how long can relatives keep feeding us?" she said.Boatmen were also brought in from Ayodhya to help with rescue efforts. Pahari Nishad, from Jamthra Ghat in Ayodhya, who had been in Lucknow for five to six days, said boats were transported by road. "We make as many trips as we can during the day. We have to go inside the village, from house to house," he added.For some residents, leaving home brought another worry: theft.Archit Tiwari, an accountant at a jewellery shop in Chowk, has been staying with his in-laws in Triveni Nagar but was preparing to return to his three-storey house on Thursday."Bahut choriyaan hui hain (There have been many thefts)," he said. "Paani se darr kam, ghar lootne ka darr zyada (I am less afraid of the water and more afraid that the house will be looted)."A shelter had been set up nearby, but only a few residents were inside. Officials said many come at night, preferring to remain near their homes during the day to keep watch over their belongings.For 40-year-old Balveer, the priority was his children. He had sent his sons and daughters to their grandmother's house but stayed back with his wife because of the belongings they had left behind.On Thursday, he walked through the floodwater with a battery strapped inside a backpack. His legs were covered with marks from scratching constantly, a hazard, he said, of walking through the stagnant water. He had bought a bulb so he could keep his house lit using the battery even without electricity.The flooding has also disrupted livelihoods.Satish Pandey, who works at a shop, has been trying to keep working through the flooding. "I've been on leave for 10 days but can't afford to stay away much longer with a family of five to support," he said, carrying a dry set of clothes to change into before work.Access to drinking water remains another concern. Rani Singh, 50, originally from Gorakhpur, moved to Lucknow a few years ago because, she said, work was easier to find in the city. She eventually bought a house in the area because property was comparatively cheaper.

she had left her 14-year-old daughter at home while waiting outside the flooded area to collect drinking water and recharge her phone.Aapda hai, kisi ko dosh nahi denge. Lekin peene ka paani theek se milna chahiye. Ek-do litre ki bottle se poora din kaise chalega? (It is a calamity, and we will not blame anyone. But drinking water should be available properly. How can a one- or two-litre bottle last the whole day?)," she said, waiting for the next boat to take her home.Manisha Rawat, 20, was waiting outside a relief camp with her sister. They had not come looking for food or medicine. They had come to charge their phones. "There has been no electricity in our area for the past four days," they said.For Pritam, a farmer who has lived in Dawood Nagar all his life, the flood brought back memories of earlier inundations — 1971, 1984-85 and 2008. "2008 ke baad aisa paani nahi bhara tha (There had not been flooding like this since 2008)," he said.But he pointed to another change along the river: the growth in the number of people living there. "Pehle paanch aadmi rehte the. Ab 500 aadmi hain. Puri nayi colony bas gayi hai (Earlier, only five people lived here. Now there are 500. An entire new colony has come up)."The prolonged exposure to stagnant water has also raised health concerns. At a health camp in the area, Dr Navdeep said more than 240 people had been examined, most complaining of itching, fever and stomach-related infections. One resident said many people had been unable to bathe for nearly 10 days.Snake-bite cases have also been reported, though no deaths have occurred, officials said. A snake catcher and Forest Department teams have been stationed in the area.Opposition targets government

On the ground, the district administration, municipal corporation, LDA, State and National Disaster Response Force, and police engaged in providing food, drinking water, medicines and other essential services, officials said.ADM (City) Singh said more than 100 boats, including those operated by the SDRF and NDRF, were deployed across the affected areas. Relief boats were also carrying supplies, and more than 25,000 bottles of drinking water had been distributed, he said.Separately, the LDA has prepared a detailed project report for an embankment extending up to Naimish in Sitapur, Kumar said. The proposal has been sent to the state government.

Sharing a video on X showing the waterlogged area around a mall, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav took a dig at the government and said, "Kashi na ban paaya Kyoto, aur na Gorakhpur Spain, Par Lucknow Venice bana, chhina sab sukh-chain! (Varanasi could not become Kyoto, nor could Gorakhpur become Spain, Lucknow however has turned into Venice, taking away all happiness and peace!)," Yadav posted.Speaking to reporters on Wednesday, he alleged that the situation was a failure of the state government: "BJP wants every good thing to be ruined. They are deliberately creating a flood-like situation. They know where the barrage is, they know when it should be opened and how the water should be drained. This is their failure."He also alleged that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath did not take advice from engineers of departments including irrigation, public works, electricity and the municipal corporation.Congress state president Aradhana Mishra criticised the government over what she described as a lack of long-term planning and flood preparedness.Why was an embankment not planned over the past 10 years?

25% of daily ridership at stake: Why SC's Delhi Metro directive offers relief to lakhs of commuters



The Pink Line accounts for about 10% of network ridership, or roughly 7 lakh passenger journeys out of a daily total of 70 lakh, based on the figures cited.The Pink Line accounts for about 10% of network ridership, or roughly 7 lakh passenger journeys out of a daily total of 70 lakh, based on the figures cited.Hours after Delhi Police asked the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) to close entry and exit gates at 57 stations ahead of the October 10 CJP protest, the Supreme Court directed the Centre to ensure that metro services to Delhi were not completely halted and that stations were not shut indiscriminately.

The court called for "proportionate" measures, underscoring the potential impact of widespread closures on a transport network that carries millions of passenger journeys every day.The scale of the proposed restrictions highlights the disruption at stake. The 57 stations account for a substantial share of Delhi Metro's network, with closures potentially affecting commuters across several of its busiest corridors. The impact would extend beyond access to individual stations, disrupting interchanges and travel between Delhi, Gurgaon, Noida and Ghaziabad.The Yellow Line, which connects Samaypur Badli in north Delhi to Millennium City Centre in Gurgaon, would face the most extensive impact, with 17 stations proposed for closure. These include central Delhi stations such as Patel Chowk, New Delhi and Central Secretariat, as well as stations farther north, including Adarsh Nagar, Jahangirpuri and Haiderpur Badli Mor.

The line accounts for a significant share of network traffic. Delhi Metro's ridership figures for last year show that it recorded more than 18 lakh passenger journeys out of a network-wide total of about 70 lakh, or roughly a quarter of the total.The Blue Line, which connects Delhi with Noida and other parts of the National Capital Region, would also be affected. Nine stations have been listed for closure, including Rajiv Chowk, Mandi House, Barakhamba Road, R.K. Ashram Marg, Jhandewalan, Supreme Court, Indraprastha, Karol Bagh and Rajendra Place. The corridor accounts for about 21% of the network's passenger traffic, making restrictions on the line particularly consequential for daily commuters.On the Red Line, which runs between Rithala in northwest Delhi and Shaheed Sthal in Ghaziabad, nine stations have been identified for closure. These include Inderlok, Kanhaiya Nagar, Netaji Subhash Place, Seelampur, Welcome, Shahdara, Rithala, Rohini East and Rohini West. The line accounts for around 10% of Delhi Metro's passenger journeys, according to last year's ridership data.The Pink Line, the network's orbital corridor, would face additional restrictions at stations including Sarai Kale Khan-Nizamuddin, Lajpat Nagar, Ashram, Majlis Park, Shalimar Bagh, Yamuna Vihar and Khazuri Khas. Some stations overlap with those on other affected corridors, making it important to distinguish between the number of station closures and the number of unique stations affected.The Pink Line accounts for about 10% of network ridership, or roughly 7 lakh passenger journeys out of a daily total of 70 lakh, based on the figures cited.The proposed closures would therefore have affected multiple high-ridership corridors simultaneously, potentially limiting commuters' ability to switch lines even where services continued to operate elsewhere on the network.

Cockroach Janta Party's anti-Gyanesh Kumar protest in Delhi: Full coverage



The collective protest targets Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar over alleged severe irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter rolls.Led by CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke and Opposition MPs like Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge, Abhishek Banerjee, Derek O'Brien, and Akhilesh Yadav, the protest demands Gyanesh Kumar's immediate resignation over alleged irregularities in the SIR exercise and stopping the Election Commission's voter roll revision.Rahul Gandhi and Opposition leaders have also called called for the protest following prior demonstrations that ended in widespread police detentions. The Opposition says arbitrary voter deletions threaten democracy, while the Election Commission denies wrongdoing.Anticipating major disruptions, Delhi authorities in Delhi have imposed heavy security measures across the region.Over 23,000 security personnel are have been deployed; 57 Metro stations in the NCR have been shut; the New Delhi and Nizamuddin railway stations have been shut and all trains to and from the stations have been closed; barricades have been put up to ward off protesters.Additionally, restrictions against large gatherings have been put across New Delhi district under Section 163 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, Section 163.

'Hospital ransack a conspiracy': Suvendu Adhikari accuses Mamata Banerjee in RG Kar case



Two months after the West Bengal government ordered a fresh probe into the alleged RG Kar rape-murder of a trainee doctor in 2024, Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari launched a scathing attack on the previous Trinamool regime, stating that miscreants ransacked the hospital a few days after the crime at the behest of the then chief minister Mamata Banerjee to sabotage the investigation.He also claimed that the then local MLA Atin Ghosh was involved in the August 14, 2024 incident, when the miscreants attacked the emergency building of the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata."The incident happened when people across the state were busy protesting at different places seeking justice for the junior doctor who was allegedly raped and murdered on August 9, 2024, inside the emergency building of the hospital. Police made way for them and the local MLA (Atin Ghosh). All these incidents happened at the behest of the then Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. It was a conspiracy," Adhikari said on Friday during a convention of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital.The chief minister alleged that the miscreants' attempt to enter the crime scene was somehow thwarted.Ratna Devnath, the rape victim's mother and BJP MLA, who was present in the meeting, said, "They not only tried to suppress the incident but also destroyed the evidence."However, during his speech, Suvendu Adhikari also said, "Investigation is going on, and nobody will be spared."In a separate proceeding, former civic volunteer Sanjay Roy was convicted by a Sealdah court and sentenced to imprisonment for the remainder of his life for the rape and murder.

Can't reach Delhi? Come to Pune, Rohit Pawar tells CJP protesters

Calling it a fight to save democracy and the Constitution, not just the students' fight, Pawar said, "Through our impenetrable unity, we will not rest until we force this thick-skinned system to yield."Calling it a fight to save democracy and the Constitution, not just the students' fight, Pawar said, "Through our impenetrable unity, we will not rest until we force this thick-skinned system to yield."With trains cancelled and restrictions in place in Delhi ahead of the Cockroach Janata Party's (CJP) protest against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Saturday, NCP (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar on Friday asked those unable to reach the capital to join the students' protest he is leading in Pune instead.The Ministry of Railways has cancelled mail and express trains due to arrive at New Delhi and Hazrat Nizamuddin stations between 4 am and 2 pm on October 10, calling it a precautionary measure against heavy road traffic near the stations. Two Rajdhani trains from Mumbai Central have been rescheduled by five hours, and the Bandra Terminus-Hazrat Nizamuddin express has been cancelled. Delhi Police has denied permission for the Jantar Mantar protest, and prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the BNSS are in force in New Delhi district."Let's go to Pune! Even if Delhi is far away, the fight is right at our doorstep! Lakhs of youth and citizens from across the country have set off for the protest being held tomorrow in Delhi against the dictatorship of the Election Commission. However, scared of this public outrage, the government has cancelled the trains heading to Delhi! Though a fearful government has placed a ban on our travel, they cannot ban our thoughts. Because of this, thousands of citizens from Maharashtra, including Pune, have been stranded," Pawar said.He said the fight would not stop. "For the past 9 days in Pune, MPSC students have been leading a historic satyagraha against this insensitive government and the MPSC chairperson for their just demands.

Therefore, I make a heartfelt appeal to all citizens and today's revolutionaries who could not go to the Delhi protest: no matter which field you belong to, consider this satyagraha of MPSC students in Pune as 'Delhi' itself for the next two days—tomorrow, Saturday (10th), and the day after, Sunday (11th)—and step into the movement with full force," he said.Calling it a fight to save democracy and the Constitution, not just the students' fight, Pawar said, "Through our impenetrable unity, we will not rest until we force this thick-skinned system to yield."

She refused abortion. Police say husband, lover strangled her with handkerchief

An affair that began in a library took a tragic turn in Gujarat's Gandhinagar, ending in the murder of a pregnant woman.The police on Friday booked Rohitji Rameshji Thakor, a 33-year-old father-of-four, for allegedly strangling his pregnant wife, Sangeeta, using a handkerchief. Officials said Thakor fell in love with another woman while still studying for competitive exams at a library and was angry with his wife for refusing to terminate her pregnancy. The police also booked the woman with whom Thakor was allegedly in a relationship with, Varsha Narsingh Pargi, accusing her of abetting the crime.Thakor allegedly tried to pass off Sangeeta's death as an adverse drug reaction. However, her relatives noticed marks on her neck at the hospital, prompting suspicion.



"From the neck marks, it came to light that it was not a hanging but a possible strangulation. The accused was detained and told investigators that he already has four children and that Sangeeta had become pregnant once again. He wanted to go for abortion but Sangeeta declined it, leading to a fight and the murder," Ravi Teja Vasamsetty, Superintendent of Police, Gandhinagar, told The Indian Express.Married since 2012According to the FIR based on a complaint by Sangeeta's cousin, Meru Bachu Vasaniya, Thakor and Sangeeta married in 2012 and have four children, three daughters and a son. At 6 am on Thursday, Vasaniya said he received a call from Sangeeta's father-in-law, asking him to reach Gandhinagar Civil Hospital as she had been admitted there following an "adverse drug reaction". Her condition was serious, he was allegedly told.When Vasaniya and other family members reached the hospital at about 11 am, they found that Sangeeta had already been declared dead, the FIR states. It was then that Vasaniya allegedly he noticed the strangulation marks on his cousin's neck.According to the FIR, Thakor allegedly confessed to the murder before the complainant, stating that he fell in love with Pargi, a Dahod resident, after meeting her in a library they frequented. Subsequently, Thakor and Pargi allegedly began living together. When Sangeeta came to Gandhinagar and saw him speak to Pargi over the phone, the allegedly argued.According to the FIR, this Thakor and Pargi decided to murder Sangeeta. "Both of us strangled Sangeeta with a handkerchief and killed her," the FIR claims, quoting Thakor's purported confession.

Shut by Mundhe's FDA in July, BMC's HQ canteen to now show what's in your food



The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) will put up posters listing the ingredients and nutritional values of food served at its headquarters canteen in Fort, in a pilot initiative to encourage healthy eating, officials said. The decision comes after the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) sealed the canteen in July.According to officials, the pilot will be launched by this month and the BMC plans to replicate it at canteens in its 26 ward offices and civic-run hospitals soon.

The canteen, on the first floor of the headquarters annex building, serves hundreds, including civic staff, citizens, contractors, politicians, pensioners and labourers who visit the office daily. It was shut on July 23 after the FDA suspended the operator's licence when an inspection found glaring violations of food safety norms. The operator, M/s Kamal Caterers Private Limited, was served an FDA notice on July 22. It reopened in August after the FDA's re-inspection noted improvement and rated the premises 94 per cent compliant.Sources said the BMC's canteen committee made a preliminary visit to collect data on the canteen's snacks and meals and prepare a list of nutritious items. "The list prepared by the canteen committee has been submitted to the BMC's in-house nutritionist who is now preparing a detailed list of nutritional values of select items served at the canteen," a government official told

Once the nutritionist gives final approval, small posters across the canteen will list the ingredients of the food items, along with a sentence on the most prominent nutritional value.The Fort canteen posters are likely to be up by October-end, sources said, adding that similar posters will gradually come up at all BMC-run canteens in the city, including at Nair and JJ hospitals.The initiative follows a September 2 order by the government's Public Health Department mandating balanced and healthy meals at government and semi-government meetings, as well as snacks in canteens.

Four BJP members launch temporary 'NaMo Mall' offering Puja outfits for Rs 10 in Bengal's Panihati



With Durga puja around the corner, four BJP members in Panihati have set up a temporary "NaMo Mall", where economically weaker residents can buy new clothes for Rs 10.The initiative was launched in Panihati near HB town in North 24-Parganas district on Thursday and was inaugurated by Union Minister of State for Education Sukanta Majumdar. The organisers said the mall stocked around 10,000 new garments, including sarees, shirts, trousers and children's clothes and drew around 2,500 visitors on its first day.Amit Das, a member of BJP's Panihati social media cell and a businessman, said the idea came from watching children outside shopping malls during Puja."Durga Puja is the biggest festival of Bengalis and we all buy new clothes. Whenever I bought clothes from malls for my family I always saw children outside standing and watching. I used to feel bad. Then an idea came that why not have a temporary set-up and offer clothes for just Rs 10 for those who are from the economically backward class," Das told The Indian Express.Das said the initiative was named after Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the party was celebrating his birthday and 25 years in public office.

The mall will remain open till October 11, from 10 am to 4 pm, with a one-hour lunch break, organisers said. Each person can purchase one item of clothing against a coupon. "The stock also includes new clothes bought by us and donated by other people," Das said.BJP sources said this was the first temporary "NaMo Mall" in the state and similar stalls will be set up in other districts during the Puja season. The initiative has been linked by the party to its "Seva Sankalp Abhiyan".State Industry Minister Tapas Roy said the malls were intended as a Puja gift for ordinary people.Majumdar said the initiative was aimed at allowing economically weaker people to buy clothes rather than receive them as donations."Other parties are vote-centric. They are seen before votes and then they are not seen, but we are not vote-centric. There is no vote here but we are running initiatives. We want to see smiles on everyone's face, including the downtrodden, while also keeping their self-respect that they are not taking any donation but buying it themselves," the union minister said.BJP sources also said the initiative

Canada PR pathway for Indians: Who benefits from new immigration rules?

Canada Visa permitsTwo one-time initiatives, along with changes to the Express Entry system and provincial programmes, are creating opportunities for some temporary workers and professionals in Canada. Indians, including Punjabis employed in key sectors, stand to benefit.For Indians hoping to settle in Canada, the question is increasingly not how to get there, but how to stay.In Brampton and Surrey, and at truck stops and farms in smaller Ontario and Prairie towns, conversations in Punjabi communities are increasingly centred on who will qualify for permanent residence as Canada tightens its immigration policies.



The country is moving away from high-volume immigration towards a more selective approach that favours those already living and working there. Two one-time initiatives, along with changes to the Express Entry system and provincial programmes, are creating opportunities for some temporary workers and professionals. Indians, including Punjabis employed in key sectors, stand to benefit.The most significant measure is the In-Canada Workers Initiative, under which up to 33,000 temporary skilled workers are to be transitioned to permanent residence over 2026 and 2027. At least 20,000 admissions are targeted for 2026, with the rest to follow in 2027. These are additional to the regular annual permanent resident target of 3.8 lakh.The initiative does not open a fresh application stream. Instead, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) is accelerating existing applications under specified regional and occupation-based programmes, including the Provincial Nominee Program, Atlantic Immigration Program, Rural Community Immigration Pilot, caregiver pilots and Agri-Food Pilot.The focus is on workers who have lived for at least two years in smaller communities, outside Canada's 41 major Census Metropolitan Areas, and are employed in sectors facing labour shortages, including agriculture, transportation, healthcare, caregiving and skilled trades.The criteria fit many Punjabi workers, who have a strong presence in trucking, farming, food processing and other occupations sustaining rural economies. Those who moved beyond major cities, paid taxes and already applied for permanent residence through qualifying regional programmes could see their applications move faster.Canada has also recalibrated its Express Entry system for 2026. New category-based draws target physicians, researchers and senior managers with Canadian work experience, transport occupations such as pilots and aircraft mechanics, and skilled military recruits. These operate alongside categories covering healthcare and social services, trades, education and French-language proficiency.Recent rounds have included provincial nominee and Canadian Experience Class draws, a trades draw offering 3,500 invitations at a Comprehensive Ranking System cut-off of 476 in early October, and physician draws with comparatively low cut-offs. Indian professionals already working in Canada could benefit from the emphasis on Canadian experience.Ontario, meanwhile, has increased the points awarded under its Workforce Priority Stream to candidates who earned at least $80,000 in a single year. Verified through a Canada Revenue Agency Notice of Assessment issued within the past five years, these earnings now fetch 10 points, up from the previous top bracket of eight points for earnings of $70,000 or more. The change was applied automatically to existing profiles in early October.

For many Indians , the shift offers hope, but also underlines how much the immigration route has changed. Truck drivers, farm workers, caregivers and tradespeople settled in smaller towns may find a clearer route to permanent residence. Higher-earning professionals in Ontario could improve their provincial rankings.At the same time, permanent resident admissions for Indian citizens fell nearly 25 per cent in the early months of 2026, according to figures cited in recent reports. Study permits and other temporary pathways have tightened, making the once-familiar route from education to work and permanent residence far less certain.The immigration levels plan for 2027-29, expected by early November, is being closely watched by families in India seeking clues about whether Canada will widen access again.

At 85, Pune father's biggest worry: Who will care for daughter with schizophrenia?

At 85, Amrit Bakhshy is racing against time. The Pune resident's biggest concern is the future of his daughter, Richa, 53, who has been living with schizophrenia for more than three decades. "My time has come, and I may not be there tomorrow. What will happen to Richa?" asks Bakhshy, her primary caregiver.A former president of the Schizophrenia Awareness Association (SAA) in Pune, Bakhshy has moved a district court seeking limited guardianship "with complete care" for his daughter.Ahead of World Mental Health Day on October 10, Bakhshy's story highlights the struggles of families caring for relatives with chronic mental illnesses.

"When one person develops a severe mental illness, the whole family is affected. Family members often become caregivers, advocates and silent supporters. They face emotional, social and financial challenges while continuing to stand beside their loved one," Dr Nishikant Thorat, Head of Department of Psychiatry, B J Government Medical College and Sassoon General Hospital, Decades of living with schizophreniaRicha was first diagnosed with schizophrenia in 1991. School authorities in Dehradun called Bakhshy and his wife after noticing that she was frequently getting into altercations and experiencing what appeared to be nervous breakdowns at school.After her diagnosis, the Bakhshys brought Richa back to Mumbai, where the family was then based. One doctor, he recalled, said that Richa's condition could be a one-time episode and discouraged the use of antipsychotic medication. "But that was a mistake, and we soon realised that her symptoms had not disappeared," he says.Richa was studying at Baroda University at the time. "We soon learned that her symptoms had flared up again. Her friends told us that she would leave Rs 100 notes at a temple," says Bakhshy.Eventually, Richa returned home and the family moved to Pune. Bakhshy began researching schizophrenia and exploring ways to help his daughter cope. His wife, meanwhile, sought solace in prayer.

Dealing with crisesIn 2007, the family connected with SAA, a community-based organisation supporting people with mental illness and their families.By then, Bakhshy had dedicated himself to supporting both his daughter and his wife, who was battling ovarian cancer. He began researching practical approaches to caregiving, learning more about schizophrenia, and exploring ways to manage the stress, uncertainty and other challenges that come with caring for a family member with a serious mental health condition. He also supported his ailing wife, who



passed away during the COVID-19 pandemic.Bakhshy and Richa stayed within the SAA campus. Though there were harrowing moments where she endured seizures, involving trips to the hospital, Bakhshy says he learned to face these crises with quiet resilience."I don't mind that she checks on me every five minutes, whether I am in a meeting or sitting quietly in another room," he says, adding that he wants to ensure that Richa has the care and support she needs to live with dignity, even when he is no longer around.'To understand mental illness, we must listen'world mental health day pune man Pune's Sassoon General Hospital has set up a 'Mental Health Wall' where people have shared how healing takes time and asking for help is courageous. (Photo: Special arrangement)"Mental health problems are increasingly affecting individuals, families and communities. Disorders such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder can be chronic and may require long-term treatment, rehabilitation and continuing support. But living with a mental illness is about much more than the illness itself," Dr Thorat, the president of the Indian Psychiatry Society's Pune branch, said.

Around 150-200 patients visit the psychiatry outpatient department at Sassoon General Hospital every day. At least 20 of these are new cases. As per hospital data from January to September this year, 31,655 new and follow-up patients with mental health conditions have undergone treatment."To understand mental illness, we must listen," Dr Thorat said, adding that people with mental illness often struggle with stigma, discrimination, lack of recognition and understanding, inadequate family or social support, financial dependence, etc.Sassoon General Hospital has set up a 'Mental Health Wall' where people have shared their thoughts.

Fake boss, Rs 1.40 crore gone: 4 held in Bengaluru university fraud

Bengaluru university WhatsApp scam, WhatsApp boss scam, Bengaluru university fraud, Karnataka Cyber Command, fake WhatsApp profile scam, WhatsApp money transfer fraud, mule bank accounts, cybercrime arrests Bengaluru, Bengaluru online financial fraud, Karnataka cybercrime helpline 1930, Bengaluru crime news, Indian Express news, Bengaluru cyber crime, Bengaluru cyber crime newsThe police said they seized Rs 8.50 lakh in cash and four mobile phones during the operation. (AI-Generated Image)A WhatsApp message bearing the photograph of a university president, a seemingly routine query about the bank balance, and an instruction to transfer money ended with a Bengaluru-based deemed-to-be university losing Rs 1.40 crore.

The Karnataka Cyber Command said Thursday it busted a "boss scam" and arrested four people for allegedly orchestrating the fraud, in which investigators say the accused monitored the institution's financial transactions before executing the transfer.The police said they arrested Annayya, 25, Buspalli Ravikumar Reddy, 26, Ambaraya, 39, and Syed Wajihuddin Quadri, 25.While Annayya was arrested from K R Puram in Bengaluru, Andhra Pradesh residents Reddy and Ambaraya were arrested from Hyderabad during a raid by the team. Quadri, a Hyderabad resident, was caught when he arrived to collect the money. A fifth accused, identified as Sunny alias David, is absconding.The police produced the four accused before a court, and efforts are underway to trace Sunny.The police said they seized Rs 8.50 lakh in cash and four mobile phones during the operation.The case came to light after Santosh A S, a university employee, filed a complaint on September 9. According to the complaint, an unidentified person created a fake WhatsApp profile using the photograph of university president Dr Chenraj Roychand.

On September 8, at around 10.03 am, the accused allegedly contacted university accountant Vinay Bhushan, posing as the president, and enquired about the balance in the institution's bank account.At around 11.34 am, the person instructed him to transfer Rs 1.40 crore. Believing the message to be genuine, the accountant transferred the amount, the police said.They registered a case at the South Division Cyber Crime Police Station under sections of the Information Technology Act and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

Investigators found that the accused allegedly sent a ZIP file to staff members of the institution and accessed institutional data through their systems by logging into WhatsApp Web using Chrome.They then monitored the university's financial transactions for 15 to 20 days before carrying out the transfer. The police said they also detected foreign IP addresses during the transactions."The accused allegedly circulated a ZIP file containing Trojan malware through WhatsApp. The file was presented as an important document, and the recipient opened it. According to our investigation, the accused subsequently gained access to institutional data and monitored the university's financial transactions for 15 to 20 days before carrying out the fraud," a senior police official part of the investigation said.According to investigators, Sunny instructed Annayya to persuade friends and acquaintances to open bank accounts and obtain cheque books in exchange for money. The gang allegedly then received the account details.Reddy and Ambaraya were allegedly stationed in Hyderabad, while Quadri was summoned to withdraw the funds through cheques and hand over the cash to Ambaraya.

"The investigation is examining how the money was routed through bank accounts and the role of the account holders in withdrawing or transferring the funds," the officer said.The police said the Rs 8.50 lakh seized during the operation was allegedly linked to another online fraud case in Aurangabad, Maharashtra.According to the police, the accused used more than 60 mule bank accounts in 22 online fraud cases across several states.The Cyber Command advised people to independently verify WhatsApp messages that request urgent financial transfers, even if the sender's profile shows a senior official or employer.The police have also warned against opening unknown ZIP files or suspicious links and allowing others to use bank accounts in exchange for commissions.People should not trust a message or file simply because it comes from a known contact. Fraudsters can use compromised accounts to impersonate senior officials or colleagues. Any request for an urgent financial trans

Gold smuggling bid using baggage trolleys: 2 travellers held at Bengaluru airport



In a novel modus operandi to bypass customs checks, two travellers who arrived from Kuala Lumpur at the Bengaluru International Airport this week attempted to smuggle 1.2 kg of gold biscuits by secretly attaching the packs to the underside of passenger baggage trolleys, officials said Acting on specific intelligence, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) monitored the two passengers on their arrival and later arrested them.The gold, concealment material, and the baggage trolleys used for concealment were seized, the agency said.

"During the course of surveillance, the passengers were observed sticking packets containing gold to the underside of baggage trolleys and thereafter moving away from the trolleys," DRI said in a statement.According to DRI, once the airport baggage trolleys with gold biscuits valued at Rs 1.78 crore were used by unsuspecting passengers to transport their luggage out of the airport, the smugglers would follow them to retrieve the hidden gold from the trolleys."This is a new and unique modus operandi that has been unearthed. It avoids carrying the smuggled gold through customs checks themselves," DRI sources said.The DRI, however, did not disclose the names of the passengers involved in the case, citing further investigations to identify the network involved in the racket."The passengers who had concealed the gold were observed following and monitoring the movement of such unsuspecting passengers and the trolleys, apparently with the intention of allowing the trolleys to move beyond the customs area and thereafter retrieving the concealed gold," the DRI said.Twelve gold biscuits, concealed in two packets, were recovered during inspection. "The recovered gold was found to be of 999.9 fineness (24-karat) and weighed 1,200.40 grams, valued at Rs 1,78,88,360," the DRI said.

Telangana govt gives collectors a month to resolve pending GO 59 applications for plots up to 500 sq yards

Hyderabad: The State government directed district collectors to resolve pending applications under GO 59 involving plots measuring up to 500 square yards within a month. The government issued Memo No. 48030, instructing collectors to process the applications in accordance with prescribed rules and prevent irregularities in the implementation of the scheme.Cases in which conveyance deeds have already been issued will also be examined comprehensively. The government is seeking to fast-track the resolution of 10 to 12 categories of issues associated with Section 22-A. The latest directive is part of the government's measures to address issues relating to lands placed under Section 22-A, which restricted the registration of specified properties. The government issued seven orders so far to address various issues linked to the provision.Earlier, the government issued clarifications

Zelensky says Trump's Russian diesel deal could prolong Ukraine war



Kyiv: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has strongly criticised US President Donald Trump's agreement allowing Russia to supply diesel to the United States and global markets, arguing that the move would provide Moscow with additional funds to sustain its war against Ukraine and undermine efforts to secure peace.In a lengthy post on social media platform X, Zelensky said allowing Russia to generate revenue through petroleum product exports would strengthen the Kremlin's ability to continue military operations rather than encourage an end to the conflict."Gifts to Putin will not bring peace or any benefit to the civilised world," Zelensky wrote."Russia will 'repay' the diesel with further terror and perfidy. Allowing Russia to sell petroleum products is an investment in a war that must be ended, not prolonged," he added.

Trump on Friday (local time) announced a major agreement with Russian President Vladimir Putin under which Moscow would supply millions of tonnes of diesel to the United States and global markets. He said the move would sharply lower fuel prices.The announcement came as a Ukrainian negotiating delegation was in Florida for two days of discussions with US envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner. The talks focused on possible arrangements to end the war, including a proposed ceasefire that would halt attacks on energy infrastructure.In a post on Truth Social on Friday afternoon, Trump described his conversation with Putin as highly successful and outlined the proposed scale of Russian diesel supplies to international markets.

"I have just concluded a highly successful discussion with President Vladimir Putin, of Russia, wherein it was agreed that Russia will immediately supply over 300,000 Tons of Diesel Fuel to the American and Global Marketplace, another 500,000 Tons during the month of November, and 1,000,000 Tons immediately thereafter," Trump wrote.The US Treasury Department also issued a temporary licence easing sanctions on Russian diesel exports, facilitating the proposed supply arrangement.Zelensky questioned the timing of Trump's announcement, particularly as the Ukrainian delegation was engaged in discussions with American officials on ways to end the conflict. He suggested that the Ukrainian team's presence in Florida could be serving as a "smokescreen" for the agreement reached between Washington and Moscow.Speaking to reporters, Zelensky stressed that Ukraine's representatives were in the United States to discuss ways to stop the fighting and secure a ceasefire, making the announcement of the Russian diesel deal particularly concerning for Kyiv.He pointed to the contrast between the ongoing negotiations involving Ukrainian and American officials and the simultaneous communication between Trump and Putin, whom he described as "the leader of this war".Zelensky argued that the revenue Russia would earn from diesel exports could help sustain its military campaign and prolong the suffering caused by the conflict."Means more money for this war, more money to inflict suffering on us, without a doubt," he said, referring to the financial benefits Moscow could obtain from the agreement."It only feeds Putin and gives him the ability to fight even more," Zelensky said, describing the agreement as a "weak decision by strong partners".

Kamala Harris weighs 2028 bid as husband raises concerns: Report



Washington: Former US Vice President Kamala Harris is considering another presidential run in 2028, but her husband, Doug Emhoff, has privately expressed reservations about the prospect. Some Democratic donors have also warned that another campaign would face significant challenges, according to a media report.The Wall Street Journal reported on Friday that Emhoff has privately told people he would prefer Harris not to seek the presidency again, although those close to him expect him to support her if she decides to enter the race.

The report, citing people familiar with the conversations, said Harris has been taking steps that could lay the groundwork for another White House campaign, including meeting major donors, hiring political staff and travelling to battleground states to campaign for Democratic candidates ahead of the November midterm elections.Harris, the daughter of an Indian mother and Jamaican father, has publicly maintained that she has not decided whether to make another attempt to become America's first woman president."I have not decided if I'm going to run again," Harris said at an NAACP event in Michigan last month, according to the newspaper."I do sincerely believe '28 won't matter if we don't get through '26," she added, emphasising the importance of the upcoming congressional elections.A spokesman for Harris declined to comment on the Journal's report.Harris was the Democratic presidential nominee in 2024 and lost to Republican Donald Trump.According to the newspaper, some Democratic donors have privately questioned whether Harris should seek the nomination again, while several party figures believe Democrats should consider a fresh candidate in 2028.The report said Emhoff's concerns come after years of supporting Harris through demanding political campaigns and intense public scrutiny.

In her memoir, "107 Days," Harris described the personal toll of the 2024 campaign on their marriage, including the pressure created by political attacks and public criticism.Since leaving Washington, Emhoff has resumed practising law in Los Angeles, while the couple have purchased a home in Malibu.Despite uncertainty surrounding her presidential ambitions, Harris has remained politically active.The Journal reported that she has participated in several private fundraisers in California, including events supporting Wisconsin gubernatorial candidate David Crowley and Nevada gubernatorial candidate Aaron Ford.She also joined a Democratic National Committee mobilisation call involving more than 2,000 volunteers, encouraging campaign workers to reach voters in competitive states.Harris is expected to campaign in Nevada and Georgia, including on behalf of Democratic Senator Jon Ossoff, who is seeking re-election.She has also strengthened her political operation, working with advisers including former ambassador Candace Bond and communications director Eduardo Negrón.The report said Harris has maintained ties with Democratic strategist Brian Fallon, who worked on her 2024 presidential campaign.Her political activities come as several prominent Democrats weigh potential presidential bids.California Governor Gavin Newsom, another possible contender, has said he would not run if Harris entered the race, according to the newspaper.Harris continues to have support among important Democratic constituencies, particularly Black women, and has been campaigning to mobilise voters in competitive states.Democratic strategist Donna Brazile, who remains in contact with Harris, told the Journal that the former vice president was concentrating on helping Democratic candidates in the November elections.Harris served as vice president from 2021 to 2025 under Joe Biden, becoming the first woman, first Black American and first person of South Asian descent to hold the office. Before that, she represented California in the US Senate and served as the state's attorney general.

Elon Musk steps up Ambani criticism, shares reports on Reliance-linked BJP donations

New Delhi: Elon Musk has intensified his criticism of industrialist Mukesh Ambani amid delays in the launch of Starlink satellite internet services in India, sharing media reports alleging that a Reliance-funded firm helped boost BJP campaigns on social media and that a Reliance-linked company made substantial political donations to the ruling party.In a post on X on Saturday, Musk shared a 2022 Al Jazeera report titled "How a Reliance-funded firm boosts BJP's campaigns on Facebook" and an archived 2024 report by The Indian Express on Qwik Supply, which reported that the Reliance-linked company donated Rs 385 crore to the BJP and Rs 25 crore to the Shiv Sena through electoral bonds.

The posts follow a series of sharp exchanges over Starlink's entry into India. On Friday, Musk sarcastically addressed Ambani as "Prime Minister Ambani" and accused him of seeking to protect a monopoly by restricting competition."Dear Prime Minister Ambani, Please accept my humble apologies for not realising that you are the real boss of India," Musk wrote, questioning whether Ambani would allow Starlink to compete in the Indian market.Musk also argued that satellite internet could benefit underserved communities, giving children access to education and helping small businesses reach global markets. He said Starlink had helped save lives during natural disasters when other communication systems failed.

Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, meanwhile, maintained that India does not permit monopolies in any sector and that satellite communication licences are granted under a fair and non-discriminatory framework.Speaking at the India Mobile Congress in New Delhi, Scindia said three companies — Starlink, Reliance Jio's satellite venture Jio Satcom and Bharti-backed Eutelsat OneWeb — had secured satcom licences. Amazon's Project Kuiper has also expressed interest and must follow the prescribed process, he said.The minister clarified that licence holders could begin operations after meeting security requirements and other stipulated conditions, once the government



finalises the spectrum pricing framework.Scindia said the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) and the Department of Telecommunications were nearing a decision on the pricing regime for satellite spectrum.Musk had earlier questioned why Starlink, which he said was licensed in more than 165 countries, had yet to begin operations in India despite spending five years complying with the government's requirements.The dispute has brought renewed attention to competition in India's emerging satellite broadband market, where regulatory approvals, spectrum pricing and security clearances remain key requirements for commercial services.

India warns of fitting response to any terror attack by Pakistan

United Nations: India has warned Pakistan that it will not be deterred by Islamabad's use of nuclear threats to evade the consequences of terrorism and will respond to terror attacks."India will not bow to nuclear blackmail," Anmol Sher Bedi, senior adviser at India's Permanent Mission to the UN Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, said on Friday.He warned Pakistan that "any terrorist attack against India will receive a fitting response" and that India would "make no distinction between those who sponsor terrorism and those who mastermind it".Operation Sindoor, launched last year against terrorist bases in Pakistan, "followed a grave provocation" in the form of the Pahalgam terror attack by Pakistan-based terrorists, who killed 26 civilians, he said."India acted in self-defence," he said, adding that "these actions were measured, targeted, and designed to be non-escalatory"."Nuclear weapons must not be treated as routine instruments of statecraft" and "a posture that relies on nuclear overhang to limit the consequences of subconventional activity raises the risk of escalation and not the prospect of restraint," he said at a meeting of the UN General Assembly's First Committee, which deals with disarmament issues, in New York.He was responding to Tahir Andrabi, Pakistan's permanent representative to the UN in Geneva, who spoke at the meeting.Bedi assured the committee that India's nuclear capabilities were not directed at any country and stressed that they "are defensive in nature"."They are shaped by our own security environment," he said.India, unlike Pakistan, has declared a no-first-use policy, meaning it will not be the first to use nuclear weapons against any country.Bedi, who responded strongly to Pakistan, is from Amritsar and secured second rank in the 2016 public service examination. He holds a computer science degree from BITS Pilani and has studied Mandarin in China.He questioned Pakistan's calls for nuclear cooperation, citing the nuclear proliferation network run by Abdul Qadeer Khan, who headed Pakistan's nuclear programme. The network provided nuclear weapons know-how to other countries and traded nuclear material for missile technology with North Korea, he said.Bedi warned countries to safeguard their interests when cooperating with Islamabad on nuclear and military technology."On proliferation, India refers to the history of the AQ Khan network, which contributed to the Security Council Resolution 1540 almost two decades back," he said."This is relevant in the context of demands for unquestioned nuclear cooperation and transfer of advanced weapons and military capabilities," he said.



"We urge all states and all responsible suppliers to exercise the highest degree of vigilance, not because of India, but for their own security," he said.Security Council Resolution 1540, adopted in 2004, is a binding measure prohibiting countries from transferring weapons of mass destruction to terrorists, referred to in the resolution as non-state actors, or enabling them to obtain such weapons. It also established the 1540 Committee to monitor compliance.Bedi said Pakistan's use of repeated crises fuelled by terrorism destabilised the region."In India's experience, crises in the region have tended to follow a recurring pattern: first, provocation; second, denial of responsibility; and third, appeals for restraint once a response has been made," he said."That is how instability becomes useful, and that is how the cycle keeps on repeating," he said.Bedi said this was enabled by Pakistan's system of governance, in which the military wielded real power."Those in power are neither elected by people nor accountable to them, their decisions carry no risk and impose no cost for those who take them," he said. "That is how crisis becomes an instrument of power."The role of the military leadership in Pakistan was highlighted during UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' recent visit to the country, when he met military chief Asim Munir, an unusual step as formal talks with military leaders are not part of his usual itinerary.Bedi said India had put the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance because it was signed on the understanding that both sides would maintain trust and cooperation, which Pakistan had undermined.Responding to Andrabi's reference to Kashmir, Bedi said Pakistan raised the issue regardless of the topic under discussion."Jammu and Kashmir is an integral and inalienable part of India. We call for India's illegally occupied territories to be vacated and returned back," he said.

US lawmakers urge FBI chief Kash Patel to cancel reported Russia trip

Washington: Two senior Democratic lawmakers have urged Indian-origin FBI Director Kash Patel to cancel a reported visit to Russia, warning that the trip could expose sensitive American intelligence to espionage and pose serious national security risks amid heightened tensions between Washington and Moscow.Representatives Jim Himes, the top Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, and Jamie Raskin, the ranking Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, raised their concerns in a letter to Patel made public

The lawmakers questioned why the head of America's premier federal investigative agency would travel to Russia while Washington has imposed sweeping sanctions on Moscow over its war against Ukraine."In the interest of national security, we ask you to reconsider. Call off this trip," the lawmakers wrote.According to their letter, Patel is reportedly planning a two-day visit to Moscow and St Petersburg, where he is expected to be hosted by Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB), the successor to the Soviet-era KGB.The lawmakers warned that the FSB has a history of surveillance, cyber espionage and intelligence operations targeting American officials, diplomats and other US personnel.

They also expressed concern over reports that Patel has been pursuing closer cooperation between the FBI and Russian and Chinese law enforcement agencies, including personnel exchanges and intelligence sharing.Such arrangements, they argued, could provide foreign intelligence services with opportunities to penetrate American institutions and obtain sensitive information.The lawmakers questioned whether expanding cooperation with Moscow and Beijing was consistent with the administration's broader national security priorities.Their letter cited reports that Chinese officials had been granted unusual access to American intelligence personnel, diplomatic officials, government facilities and contractors.The allegations concerning the scope of that access were based on previous media reports and were not independently established in the congressional statement.They also cited continuing concerns about Russian cyber operations, election interference and



alleged intelligence assistance to Iran in attacks involving American forces in the Middle East.The letter referred to a reported Russian intelligence-linked plot to assassinate a prominent dissident in Washington.The lawmakers said Patel had challenged US intelligence assessments of Russian interference in American elections in a documentary.They did not provide evidence that Patel had compromised classified information, and the letter did not establish that any security breach had occurred.If Patel proceeds with the visit, Himes and Raskin have demanded a closed-door congressional briefing by 5 pm on October 12.They want details of the FBI's cooperation with Russia, China, Iran and North Korea, including any objections raised internally by intelligence or law enforcement officials.The requested briefing would also examine who proposed the Russia visit, its purpose, Patel's itinerary, planned meetings and the identities of those accompanying him.The lawmakers specifically sought information about measures to protect against Russian espionage, including secure communications and other counterintelligence safeguards.The October 5 letter was released publicly on October 9.Patel, who is of Indian origin, heads the FBI, which is responsible for federal criminal investigations, domestic counterintelligence and counterterrorism operations. The bureau also maintains international law enforcement relationships to address transnational crime and security threats.

Trump defends Russian diesel deal, says US needs oil supplies

Washington: US President Donald Trump thanked Russian President Vladimir Putin for a major oil deal involving diesel supplies to the United States, defended the agreement amid criticism from Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and kept open the possibility of further military action against Iran.Speaking to reporters at the White House before leaving for a political rally in Syracuse, New York, Trump described the Russian energy agreement as significant for American supplies and global oil markets."By the way, I think you heard about the oil deal with Russia. That is a big deal. That is massive amounts of oil coming into our country. And I want to thank President Putin, to be honest with you," Trump said.

"We have massive amounts of oil being coming into our country and it's diesel, which is what we want. So thank you," he added.Trump's remarks came as a reporter cited criticism from Zelensky, who was described as having called Trump weak over the agreement.Trump defended the need for energy supplies and emphasised the importance of diesel. He also claimed that the agreement was contributing to lower energy prices.

"Look, we need it. Oil prices are already dropping like a rock, so we're very happy to get it," Trump said.Turning to Iran, Trump declined to rule out additional American military action when asked why such action was being linked to the upcoming midterm elections rather than undertaken immediately.Trump portrayed Iran as a country facing severe military and economic difficulties.The military is defeated. They have no Navy.



They have no Air Force," he said, while also claiming that Iran was experiencing inflation of 300 per cent.Asked separately about a reported attack on an airport in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Trump expressed disapproval."No good. It's not a good thing. I'm not happy," he said.Trump also addressed questions about the Fort Hood shooter and the possibility of livestreaming his execution.Asked whether he wanted the execution broadcast and whether such footage could be used for extremist propaganda, Trump said he was primarily concerned that the death sentence be carried out."So I really don't care how he goes as long as he goes. And I think that the death penalty is a very worthy way of going for him," he said.

Is social media telling you what to eat? Here's how to access accurate nutritional information



Do you start your mornings with detox water, flax-seeds, chia seeds, eat collagen for skin during the day and add a dose of magnesium for good sleep? If your answer is yes, you are not alone.The global health and wellness market stood at $1.4 trillion in 2024 according to a report by McKinsey, a multinational consulting firm. The report highlighted that people are prioritising wellness more than ever, and are looking for science-backed products. How is wellness and nutrition a central narrative of our conversations these days? Clinical nutritionist Amita Gadre explained: "Today, the ultimate status symbol is health and vitality. Glowing skin, a high-energy lifestyle, and a fit physique are the new aspirations. And social media is the perfect stage for this display."However, in an information-filled world, people are struggling to understand nutrition science, an area of study that is already a complex subject. A recent peer-reviewed study conducted on Indian students highlighted how "social media impacts an individual's eating patterns by acting as a stimulus for immediate consumption of food, cravings and trying trends." Another study from South Africa also found that social media is used to "access and implement nutrition information while showing the inability of participants to assess whether nutrition information on social media is evidence-based and correct." A simple Google search tells us what to eat or drink and how much, for our weight concerns, skin concerns or even conditions such as diabetes. However, this information is not always accurate, as it is sometimes not backed by strong scientific evidence, may promote conflicting views and could even distort scientific findings to promote one particular food item or product. "While social media has raised awareness, it has simultaneously created a "Wild West" of information that has deeply complicated the public's understanding of nutrition," said Ms. Gadre.

So what is the science behind nutrition and food?

Eating five oranges will not give you glowing skin overnightMultiple videos and posts tell how us carrots can help improve increase eyesight, certain seeds can help reduce weight, drinking eight glasses of water helps flush toxins and eating oranges can give one a glow from within. Let us first understand how our body absorbs food. Food is broken into our digestive system when we eat. It starts in the mouth with enzymes in saliva, then moves to the stomach where acids and more enzymes break things down further. The real action happens in the small intestine: this is where nutrients are absorbed through the intestinal lining and enter the bloodstream.

Vikrant Ghanekar, scientific officer, Biology Cell at Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education explained that the small intestine has an extensive supply of blood vessels to facilitate the uptake of nutrients. He added that "excess vitamins, minerals may not give immediate benefits because water-soluble vitamins (Vitamin B and Vitamin C) are lost through body fluids [urine] and excessive oil-soluble vitamins can be harmful for metabolism. Regular supply through fruits and leafy vegetables is enough to maintain a balance," he said.Ms. Gadre explained how eating one food may not immediately impact our health. "Take Vitamin C as an example (from oranges). It is water-soluble, so it is absorbed in the small intestine and carried in the blood. Your body takes only what it needs. The rest is excreted in urine. No amount of oranges can force your skin to glow instantly. Glow comes from a combination of hydration, healthy fats, protein and antioxidants, not just one vitamin. Also, absorption depends on gut health, the presence of other nutrients, and overall balance. So yes, eat your oranges. But also eat your dal, rice, ghee, sabzi, nuts - glow comes from nourishment, not gimmicks."Similarly, the much-talked about link between carrots and eyesight has some basis, but "there's nothing magical about the carrots alone". According to the University of Utah, "Carrots are a super source of beta-carotene—and that's a start. But it takes a whole lot more to protect your irreplaceable vision." Carrots benefit the eyes but they won't reverse or improve vision conditions. What many struggle to understand or often misunderstand, is whether food can cure diseases or medical conditions. Krish Ashok, author of the book Masala Lab explained: "good food provides ingredients for the body's immune system to function at its best (genetically determined) capacity. But beyond that, food cannot act like medicine."It is the same with seeds, spices and water. According to Ms. Gadre, kitchen ingredients such as carom seeds or fennel seeds (ajwain, dalchini, jeera, saunf) are great in culinary doses and have traditional digestive benefits. When asked if they could help lose weight, she said, "To expect them to cure obesity or diabetes is taking it too far. Superfoods don't undo overeating or inactivity. Weight loss and metabolic health require exercise, stress and sleep management and calorie balance." Commenting on daily water requirements, she said, "Hydration is vital, but that 8-glass rule is generic. Overhydration can lead to electrolyte imbalance. A good rule of thumb: drink when you're thirsty, sip more in hot weather or after workouts, and observe your urine color - pale yellow is ideal. Water doesn't flush toxins." The internet's latest obsession

A simple keyword search - 'how to lose weight' unwraps a whole lot. Search results lead to multiple videos explaining how to lose weight with the help of 'natural ozempic'. These videos say that a concoction of vegetables such as cucumber, celery, and bitter gourd constitute 'Nature's Ozempic' and claim that this can lower blood sugar and melt fat. Ozempic is an antidiabetic and anti-obesity medicine which is prescribed under medical supervision for weight management. There are multiple videos promoting juices of certain vegetables and drinking these on empty stomach for weight loss. Ms. Gadre, commenting on this trend, explained: "There is no clinical evidence supporting these drinks for sustainable weight loss. Moreover, Ozempic is a prescription GLP-1 drug used for type 2 diabetes under strict medical supervision. You can't DIY that with karela [bitter gourd]." She further warned that "Overconsumption of raw vegetable juices can cause bloating, nutrient imbalances, risk of kidney stones and even blood sugar dips if not combined with meals."

Hazards of social media-related nutritional informationWhile social media promotes certain foods, it also creates fear around a few food products. This makes understanding what to eat and what not to, more complex. Both sugar and carbohydrates have earned a bad reputation on social media. And while too much of either can be detrimental, many take extreme measures to curb it from their diets. The Mayo Clinic prescribes: "people need at least 130 grams of carbohydrates every day to meet the body's energy needs." A Johns Hopkins blog post on sugar explains, "Our bodies run on sugar. Removing natural sources of sugar and other carbohydrates from your diet — fruits, dairy products and grains — is not a healthy choice". Diets that cut out all carbohydrates and sugars, such as the ketogenic diet, can be harmful to your health, it says.Ms. Gadre added: "Social media thrives on black-and-white thinking. Nutrition science is all about context, dose, and individuality. Is sugar "bad"?

It depends. A spoonful in your chai is vastly different from drinking a litre of soda. The diet that worked for a 22-year-old actor in Bollywood is unlikely to be the right fit for a 45-year-old working mother in Delhi. Genetics, the gut microbiome, lifestyle, stress levels, and cultural background all determine what works for you."A peer-reviewed study conducted in Australia highlighted how social media can be is an unreliable source of nutrition information. It concluded: "Nutrition-related information published by influential Australian Instagram accounts is often inaccurate and of suboptimal quality."

The nuances of nutrition scienceWhen it comes to a nuanced understanding of nutrition science, randomised controlled trials are the gold standard to understand how and why certain foods get easily absorbed by the body. But a lot of claims are based on observations and observational studies, and therefore cannot be applied to everyone. A study by the American Diabetes Association explores what makes nutrition research so difficult to conduct and interpret. It states: "observational studies have been used to track dietary intake in large numbers of participants and can be used to track such data over many years.

The paradox of market restriction for anti-TB drugs



Tuberculosis (TB) could be drug sensitive (DS TB), which can be treated by a few first-line oral drugs, or drug resistant (DR TB), wherein there is resistance to one or more drugs, making it difficult to treat, potentially leading to more complications and even death. Drugs for any form of TB are provided free of cost through the Indian government's National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP). Newer anti-tubercular (anti-TB) drugs like Bedaquiline, Delamanid and Pretomanid are key drugs that have revolutionised the treatment of DR TB, since they are orally administered and require shorter treatment durations compared to the older regimen of daily injections, which were to be taken for many months. Another key drug is Rifapentine, which is mainly used to prevent TB in people who have come in contact with TB-infected individuals or in people with HIV disease.The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI), following a letter from the Central TB Division of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, mooted an important proposition regarding the regulation of newer anti-TB drugs in the private market, in the 66th Drugs Consultative Committee (DCC) meeting held on June 17, 2025. The DCGI is planning to restrict access to the newer anti-TB drugs Bedaquiline, Delamanid, and Pretomanid and Rifapentine by making them conditionally accessible only through NTEP, in adherence to the Standards of TB Care in India. The reasons and implications of this move need to be closely examined.

NTEP has its own exclusive procurement and supply chain management system for anti-TB drugs, laboratory consumables and TB preventive drugs. India, like many countries in the world, procures most of its anti-TB drugs from the Global Drug Facility (GDF), a not-for-profit establishment funded by the Global Fund, along with procurement via domestic funding through the Central Medical Services Society . GDF does not aim to make a profit and therefore provides drugs and consumables at very low prices to countries through bulk procurement. The Central TB Division places an order to GDF at least one year prior by forecasting the need, based on the disease burden in the country. The drugs are then routed through Government Medical Store Depots to State Drug Stores of NTEP, from where they go to District Drug Stores and then down to DOTS centres at Tuberculosis Units and Peripheral Health Institutions. This entire process is managed real-time through a portal called Ni-Kshay Aushadhi, which is accessible only to NTEP personnel. The Central procurement of drugs is based on drug requests received from peripheral health institutions at the grassroots level. Timely online drug requests through the Ni-Kshay Aushadhi portal are imperative for uninterrupted procurement and supply of drugs in NTEP. However, studies have shown the sub-optimal use of the portal in the field owing to various reasons like lack of digital literacy and training of peripheral level staff, portal interface not being user-friendly and stock planning and forecasting not being perceived as a 'felt need' by staff.

A new drug that is developed can be patented by the company that developed it (originators) for a minimum of 20 years. No other company can undertake commercial production of the drug during this period. However, when a drug goes off-patent (expiry of patent period), it can be manufactured by any other pharmaceutical company and can be marketed for use. Patenting was done in the case of Bedaquiline (Johnson & Johnson), Delamanid (Otsuka), Pretomanid (TB Alliance) and Rifapentine (Sanofi) by their originators. These drugs are procured by the government and available only through NTEP to registered beneficiaries.Over the past 5 or 6 years, patents for all these drugs have expired, except for Pretomanid, and several generic pharmaceutical companies like Lupin, Macleods, Natco, etc. have taken up the production of these drugs, leading to lower costs and more availability in the market. Since they are off-patent, these companies could produce them for the open market as well. The easy availability and low prices of antibiotics in the open market drive private prescriptions, often leading to their injudicious use. This, in turn, promotes the emergence of drug-resistant bacterial strains, ultimately rendering these antibiotics ineffective.With the advent of drug-resistant and extensively drug-resistant strains of bacteria, TB treatment is already facing a crisis which warrants the discovery of newer drugs. Hence, the move of DCGI assumes importance in the journey to combat antimicrobial resistance. Making them conditionally accessible through NTEP would ensure rational use of these drugs.

However, there are certain risks to this decision if implemented in the current context. In the event of a break in the supply chain of NTEP, these drugs would become unavailable for the persons with TB (PwTB) who are supposed to take them regularly, most often daily, without missing the doses.A terrible drug stock-out of anti-TB drugs during 2023-24 is an example of this threat. The stock-out affected almost every State in India and occurred both for DS-TB and DR-TB drugs. PwTB and their families had to run from pillar to post to obtain drugs needed daily for even the most common DS-TB regimen. Since the NTEP centres ran out of stock, a few PwTB who could afford it, sourced drugs from the open market. For persons affected by DR-TB, since drugs were available only through NTEP, they had to take incomplete regimens or miss their doses altogether. Lack of an alternative source to obtain drugs can be detrimental for PwTB if similar situations arise in future. Missed or incomplete doses can lead to delays in cure or no cure, increased risk of development of drug resistance and increased out of pocket expenditure for patients. This also leads to loss of trust in government systems built over several years, and in the larger picture, is a deterrent to our goal of TB elimination.

The proposition to make newer anti-TB drugs accessible only through NTEP is a welcome move, provided the government ensures a reliable and uninterrupted supply of drugs through the programme. Similar to how the Ni-Kshay dashboard on real-time disease burden in the country is visible to the public, the Ni-Kshay Aushadhi dashboard depicting available stock of drugs should also be made accessible. This would ensure accountability and help public health advocates to forecast and flag any potential drug stock-outs. A high level of vigilance from civil society is required to ensure that stock-outs at the regional level are predicted, prevented or mitigated.

The existing TB Mukt Panchayat initiative could be leveraged for the involvement of local self-governments (gram panchayats) in doing the same. Accountability of the programme to provide drugs to all beneficiaries can be attained if people in power are also devoted to the cause.

Some cities in the northwestern, northern Indo-Gangetic Plain shielded from long-range aerosol pollution

A study of 141 cities in India from 2003 to 2020 using satellite-retrieved aerosol data reveals a surprise — aerosol levels were significantly high in 57% of cities compared with the surrounding areas outside the city in south and southeast India, while the converse was true in the case of 43% of cities in northwest and northern Indo-Gangetic Plain (IGP) region where the aerosol levels were relatively lower in the cities compared with the surrounding areas.Researchers at the School of Earth, Ocean and Climate Sciences, IIT Bhubaneswar, refer to the cities in south and southeast India that show higher aerosol levels than the surrounding areas as Urban Aerosol Pollution Islands. And cities that show relatively lower aerosol levels compared with the surrounding areas are referred to as Urban Aerosol Clean Islands.

In the case of cities referred to as urban aerosol clean islands, the aerosol levels were not uniformly higher in the surrounding areas compared with the city. Instead, the levels were higher in the areas southwest of the city, which are located upstream of the dust flow, while the northeast side of the city located downstream of the dust flow showed less aerosol levels which almost matched the levels seen in the city. "Aerosol coming from outside wasn't adding to the pollution already seen in the cities that we refer to as urban aerosol clean islands. Instead, the cities in northwest and in the northern Indo-Gangetic Plain region were stopping or diverting the incoming aerosol and moving it around the city. We observed areas upstream of the aerosol flow had more aerosol load than the city, while the areas northeast of the city that were located downstream of the flow had less aerosol load. It is a trail going actually downwind for some distance," says Dr. V. Vinoj from IIT Bhubaneswar, and the corresponding author of a paper published on July 16, 2025 in the journal Communications Earth & Environment. "We didn't expect this."

"North Indian cities, despite being blamed for poor air quality, are found to have no consistent 'pollution domes'. Instead, we observed urban clean islands — zones with relatively lower aerosol levels than surrounding areas. We hypothesise this unexpected pattern to be linked to a phenomenon known as urban wind stilling effect," he said.

Wind stilling effectWind stilling effect refers to a weakening of surface winds across highly urbanised cities where the buildings and infrastructure reshape local climates, creating zones of atmospheric stagnation. These zones collectively lead to invisible barriers around the city (in the upwind regions), partially blocking the entry of long-range aerosol pollution, especially mineral dust from the nearby arid regions.Also, cities located in regions with high background pollution tend to slow down the transport of pollutants from outside the city, like the dust from Thar desert or aerosol from biomass burning that are transported from elsewhere. This results in cities having relatively less aerosol loading than the surrounding areas."While external sources still contribute to pollution, this barrier alters how pollutants accumulate and disperse, leading to a deceptive pocket of cleaner air within the city and its downwind regions. In contrast, southern Indian cities, with less influence from transported dust and different meteorology, show traditional pollution domes," Dr. Vinoj explains.Less aerosol load

According to Soumya Sethi, a Ph.D. scholar and the first author of the paper, the study makes it clear that the proposed barrier effect seen in cities does not eliminate pollutant transport into the city but only slows down the transport. In the process, the cities in the northwest and northern Indo-Gangetic Plain have relatively less aerosol load while the surrounding areas witness an increase in pollutant build up.The reason why cities in southern India do not have urban aerosol clean islands is because southern cities don't have any large source of pollutants coming from elsewhere to create a large aerosol background, which will allow us to see this rather invisible dome effect. Instead, we see the urban pollution island because cities are still the dominant source of pollutants, says Dr. Vinoj.The urban clean island effect was not studied during monsoon due to non-availability of data due to clouds and rain. The study looked at data for other seasons but found the urban clean islands effect was pronounced and clearly observable only during the pre-monsoon period. During other seasons, a large amount of dust or other sources of aerosols being transported long distances is not seen, making it difficult to see the urban aerosol clean islands effect clearly."The pre-monsoon time is when the signature is clear, and the urban clean islands effect becomes clearly visible," he said. The urban clean island effect normally disappears during the post-monsoon but is again seen during winter because of dry conditions but not to the extent that is seen during the pre-monsoon period.The study looked at the high dust case and no dust scenario and found the urban clean island effect became pronounced in many cities in northwest

How a simple two-minute walk can help both prevent hypertension and detect it early

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 1 in 3 adults globally -- about 1.28 billion people are living with hypertension, with nearly half unaware of it. In India, the burden is steep: over 220 million people live with hypertension, with detection and follow-up rates particularly low among younger adults and in rural populations."Even people in their twenties and thirties are now showing signs of early hypertension," says T.S. Srinath, senior consultant, cardiology, SIMS Hospital, Chennai. "But they don't get tested until symptoms appear, often too late." Therefore, doctors are pointing to an underused yet effective pair of tools -- two minutes of regular movement, and the two-minute walk test (2MWT).Movement as preventive care and diagnostic tool

First, there's movement as medicine. Multiple studies -- including recent ones by the American Heart Association show that two-minute activity breaks taken every 30–60 minutes can significantly reduce average blood pressure and improve vascular health, particularly for desk-bound adults."Physiology is cumulative," explains Surya Prakash S., consultant, Institute of Cardiac Sciences, SRM Global Hospitals. "Even just two minutes of walking every hour helps maintain blood flow, prevents arterial stiffness and reduces stress hormones, all of which matter in long-term BP control."Simple interventions, like walking during phone calls, stair use, or pacing while watching TV -- can yield benefits over time. For a country with growing rates of sedentary behaviour, this offers a low-cost and scalable solution.Then comes the two-minute walk test -- a short submaximal exercise assessment initially used to gauge endurance in elderly or cardiac patients. Today, clinicians are repurposing it to spot early signs of cardiovascular dysfunction, especially in asymptomatic or newly-diagnosed hypertensive individuals."We check how much the blood pressure rises, how fast heart



rate recovers, and whether the person reports symptoms like fatigue, dizziness, or breathlessness," explains Madan Mohan B., Interventional Cardiologist at MGM Malar Hospital, Chennai. "A systolic jump over 20 mm Hg or a delayed drop in heart rate after exercise signals poor autonomic control and vascular stress, both early signs of future risk."According to guidelines, a heart rate recovery of less than 12 bpm in one minute is associated with higher mortality and cardiovascular events.Prakash Ayyadurai, consultant, orthopaedics & sports medicine, explains his clinical experiences in using the 2MWT to uncover exercise intolerance in patients who otherwise present normal resting vitals. "A lot of people pass routine tests but struggle when asked to walk even two minutes," he says."They show palpitations, fatigue, or sweat profusely. That exertion response can reveal hidden prehypertension or vascular rigidity." Similarly, Dr. Srinath notes that in patients with mild or labile hypertension, the 2MWT is useful not only for screening but also for monitoring treatment outcomes. "If BP response improves and heart rate normalises faster over time, it tells us the patient is improving."

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